PARLIAMENT OF INDIA
RAJYA SABHA

**DEPARTMENT-RELATED PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE
ON EDUCATION, WOMEN, CHILDREN, YOUTH AND SPORTS**

THREE HUNDRED AND FORTY EIGHTH REPORT

**Demands for Grants 2023-24 of the
Department of Higher Education**

(Presented to the Rajya Sabha on 28th March, 2023)
(Laid on the Table of Lok Sabha on 28th March, 2023)

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सत्यमेव जयते

Rajya Sabha Secretariat, New Delhi
March, 2023 / Chaitra, 1945 (Saka)

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* TO BE APPENDED

COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE
(Constituted w.e.f. 13th September, 2022)

1.   Shri Vivek Thakur   -   Chairman

RAJYA SABHA
2.   Dr. Faiyaz Ahmad
3.   Shri Bikash Ranjan Bhattacharyya
4.   Ms. Sushmita Dev
5.   *Dr. K. Keshava Rao
6.   Shri Akhilesh Prasad Singh
7.   Dr. Kanimozhi NVN Somu
8.   Dr. M. Thambidurai
9.   Shri Ghanshyam Tiwari
10.   Shrimati Sangeeta Yadav

LOK SABHA
11.   Shri Rajendra Agrawal
12.   **Dr. T.R.Paarivendhar
13.   Dr. Dhal Singh Bisen
14.   *** Vacant
15.   Shri Sangam Lal Kadedin Gupta
16.   Shri Sri Krishna Devarayalu Lavu
17.   Shri Ghanshyam Singh Lodhi
18.   Shri Sadashiv Kisan Lokhande
19.   Dr. Jaisiddeshwar Shivacharya Mahaswamiji
20.   Shri Asit Kumar Mal
21.   Shri Anubhav Mohanty
22.   Shri Balak Nath
23.   Shri Chandeshwar Prasad
24.   Shri T. N. Prathapan
25.   Shri Ratansinh Magansinh Rathod
26.   Shri Jagannath Sarkar
27.   Dr. Arvind Kumar Sharma
28.   Shri Vishnu Datt Sharma
29.   Shri Dharambir Singh
30.   Shrimati Pratibha Singh
31.   Shri S. Venkatesan

*Nominated *w.e.f.*11.10.2022
** Nominated *w.e.f* 16.11.2022
*** Vacant

SECRETARIAT

Shri Jagdish Kumar, Additional Secretary

Smt Nirmala Bhatt, Joint Secretary

Shri. A.K. Mallick, Director

Shri Har Prateek Arya, Deputy Secretary

Shri Vijay Kumar Rai, Under Secretary

Shri Agam Mittal, Assistant Committee Officer

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairman of the Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Education, Women, Children, Youth and Sports, having been authorised by the Committee to present the Report on its behalf, do hereby present this Three Hundred and Forty Eighth Report of the Committee on the Demands for Grants (Demand No. 26) of the Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education for the year 2023-24.

2. In accordance with the constitutional requirement under Article 113, the estimated expenditure of the Ministries/Departments of the Government of India projected under various Demands for Grants for the upcoming financial year needs to be voted by Parliament. As a sequel thereto, Demands for Grants of the relevant Ministries/Departments stand referred to concerned Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee to make a close scrutiny thereof under Rule 270 of rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Council of States (Rajya Sabha). While making scrutiny of the Demands for Grants, the Committee has made an appraisal of the performance, programmes, schemes and policies of the Department of Higher Education *vis-a-vis* expenditure made out of Consolidated Fund of India in the current financial year.

3. The Budget allocations of the Ministry of Education have been sought under two demand Numbers, *i.e*, Demand No. 25 pertains to the Department of School Education and Literacy and Demand No.26 pertains to Department of Higher Education In this Report, a scrutiny of Demand No. 26 pertaining to the Department of Higher Education of the Ministry of Education for the Financial Year 2023-24 has been made by the Committee. While scrutiny of Demand No. 25 pertaining to Department of School Education and Literacy is covered in Report number 349th of the Committee.

4. During the course of examination of Demands, the Committee heard the views of the Secretary, Department of Higher Education and other Senior Officers of the Department in its sitting held on 27th February, 2023. The Department also made available inputs from various organizations/agencies, *namely,* University Grants Commission (UGC); All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) etc under the administrative control of the Department of Higher Education.

5. The Committee, while making its observations/recommendations, has mainly relied upon the following:-

(i) Detailed Demands for Grants of the Department of Higher Education for the year 2023-24;

(ii) Expenditure Budget 2023-24 and Output Outcome Framework 2023-24;

(iii) Annual Report 2022-23;

(iv) National Education Policy, 2020;

(v) Working Committee up Report of NITI AAYOG on 'The Three Year Action Agenda',

(vi) Presentations made by the Secretary, Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education and other Senior Officers of the Department and bodies under the administrative control of the Department of Higher Education;

(vii) Written replies furnished by the Department of Higher Education to the Questionnaires (Issues and Schemes & Budgetary Allocations) prepared by the committee; and to the points/issues raised by Members in the meeting of the Committee.

6.   The Report is based on facts, figures and submissions (both oral and written) tendered by Departments and Organisations under the Department of Higher Education, to the Committee.

7.   The Committee wishes to express its thanks to the Secretary and officers of the Department of Higher Education as well as Heads/Officers of the organizations/bodies under the administrative control of the Department of Higher Education for appearing before the Committee and furnishing the requisite information in connection with the examination of Demands for Grants of the Department.

8.   The Committee considered and adopted the Report at its meeting held on 27th March, 2023 and presented to both Houses of Parliament on 28th March, 2023.

NEW DELHI   **Shri Vivek Thakur**
27th March, 2023   *Chairman*
Chaitra, 6 /1945(Saka)   *Department-related Parliamentary*
Standing Committee on Education, Women,
Children, Youth and Sports

ACRONMYS

ABC	Academic Bank of Credit
AI	Artificial Intelligence
AIIMs	All India Institute of Medical Science
AISHE	All India Survey of Higher Education
AICTE	All India Council for Technical Education
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BE	Budget Estimates
B.Ed.	Bachelor of Education
CAG	Comptroller and Auditor General
CBCS	Choice Based Credit System
CCEA	Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs
CoA	Council of Architecture
CoE	Centre of Excellence
COVID	Corona Virus Disease
CFHEI	Centrally Funded Higher Educational Institutions
CHEI	Central Higher Educational Institutions
CSIS	Central Sector Interest Subsidy Scheme
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
CSS	Centrally Sponsored Scheme
CSSS	Champion Services Sector Scheme
CUs	Central Universities
CUHS	Central University of Himalayan Studies
DA	Dearness Allowance
DBT	Direct Benefit Transfer
DD	DoorDarshan
DII	Digital India Infoway
DRT	Debt Recovery Tribunal
DST	Department of Science and Technology
DTH	Direct to Home
EAP	Education- Quality Improvement Programme
EEC	Empowered Expert Committee
EFC	Expenditure Finance Committee
ERP	Enterprises Resource Planning
eSS	e Shodh Sindhu

FOSSEE	Free/Libre and Open Source Software for Education
FY	Financial Year
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GER	Gross Enrolment Ratio
GFR	General Financial Rule
GIA	Grant-In-Aid
GIAN	Global Initiative of Academic Network
GoI	Government of India
GSAT	Geosynchronous Satellite System
HECI	Higher Education Commission of India
HEFA	Higher Education Financing Agency
HEIs	Higher Education Institutions
HESPIS	Higher Education Statistics and Public Information System
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
ICHR	Indian Council for Historical Research
ICPR	Indian Council for Philosophical Research
ICSSR	Indian Council for Social Science Research
IGNOU	Indira Gandhi National Open University
IIM	Indian Institute of Management
IISc	Indian Institute of Science
IIT	Indian Institute of Technology
IIIT	Indian Institute of Information Technology
IISER	Indian Institutes of Science Education and Research
IKS	Indian Knowledge System
IoE	Institute of Eminence
IMPRESS	Impactful Policy Research in Social Science
IMPRINT	IMPacting Research INnovation and Technology
INFLIBNET	Information and Library Network Centre
IRINS	Indian Research Information Network System
MDC	Multidisciplinary Conference
MERITE	Multidisciplinary Education and Research Improvement in Technical Education
MeITY	Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology
MHRD	Ministry of Human Resource and Development
MMER	Management Monitoring Evaluation and Research
MoE	Ministry of Education
MOOC	Massive Open Online Course

MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
M. Phil	Master of Philosophy
MSDE	Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship
NAAC	National Assessment and Accreditation Council
NATS	National Apprenticeship Training Scheme
NBA	National Board of Accreditation
NBFC	Non-Banking Financial Company
NCs	Nodal Centers
NCGTC	National Credit Guarantee Trustee Company Ltd.
NCrF	National Credit Framework
NCs	Nodal Centres
NCERT	National Council of Educational Research and Training
ND	Non Deposit
NDL	National Digital Library
NEP	National Educational Policy
NER	North-Eastern Region
NETF	National Education Technology Forum
NeGD	National e-Governance Division
NHEQF	National Higher Education Qualification Framework
NIT	National Institute of Technology
NITI	National Institution for Transforming India
NIRF	National Institutional Ranking Framework
NKN	National Knowledge Network
NMEICT	National Mission in Education through Information and Communication Technology
NRF	National Research Foundation
NSP	National Scholarship Portal
NSQF	National Skills Qualifications Framework
NTA	National Testing Agency
OBC	Other Backward Classes
ODS	Open Design School
PDS	Plagiarism Detection Software
PFMS	Public Financial Management System
Ph.D	Doctor of Philosophy
PMMMNMTT	Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya National Mission on Teachers and Teaching
PMRF	Prime Minister Research Fellowship
PM-USP	Prime Minister -Uchhatar Shiksha Protsahan

PRAGATII	Performance Rating of Applicants through Global Aptitude Test for Indian Institutions
Ph.D	Doctor of Philosophy
PTR	Pupil Teacher Ratio
RBI	Reserve Bank of India
RISE	Revitalizing Infrastructure and Systems in Education
RE	Revised Estimates
RUSA	Rashtriya Uchhatar Shiksha Abhiyan
R&D	Research and Development
R&I	Research and Innovation
SC	Scheduled Caste
SEBC	Socially and Economically Backward Classes
SHEC	State Higher Education Council
SII	Study in India
SIIHEIs	Start-up India Initiative for Higher Educational Institutions
SPA	School of Planning and Architecture
ST	Scheduled Tribe
SSS	Special Scholarship Scheme
SNA	Single Nodal Account
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
SPARC	Scheme for Promotion of Academic and Research Collaboration
STARS	Scheme for Transformational and Advanced Research in Sciences
SWAYAM	Study Webs of Active–Learning for Young Aspiring Minds
TA	Travelling Allowance
TBCI	Textbook Companion
TEQIP	Technical Education Quality Improvement Programme
UAY	Uchhatar Avushkar Yojana
UBA	Unnat Bharat Abhiyan
UCs	Utilization Certificates
UGC	University Grants Commission
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
VC	Vice-Chancellor

<div align="center">**REPORT**</div>

1. OVERVIEW OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION

1.1 The Ministry of Education comprises of two Departments, *namely*, (i) Department of School Education and Literacy and (ii) Department of Higher Education. Each of the Departments function under the overall administrative/executive supervision of a Secretary to Government of India.

1.2. The Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education, is responsible for the overall development of the basic infrastructure of Higher Education sector, both in terms of policy and planning. The Department defines its vision as "to realize India's human resource potential to its fullest in the higher education sector with equity and excellence". The outlined Mission of the Department is as under:

- Provide greater opportunities of access to higher education with equity to all the eligible persons and in particular to the vulnerable sections;

- Expand access by supporting existing institutions, establishing new institutions, supporting State Governments and Non-Government Organizations/ Civil Society to supplement public efforts aimed at removing regional or other imbalances that exist at present;

- Initiate policies and programmes for strengthening research and innovations and encourage institutions – public or private – to engage in stretching the frontiers of knowledge; and

- Promote the quality of higher education by investing in infrastructure and faculty, promoting academic reforms, improving governance and institutional restructuring towards the inclusion of the hitherto deprived communities.

1.3 Institutional Setup

The institutional setup of the Department includes a number of autonomous institutions/bodies which are given as under:

a) University Grants Commission (UGC);

b) All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE);

c) Council of Architecture (CoA);

d) Indian Council of Historical Research (ICHR);

e) Indian Council of Philosophical Research (ICPR); and

f) Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR)

1.4 The major Acts for which the Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education is the nodal/administrative Department are as under:

(i) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT): The Institutes of Technology Act, 1961; The Institutes of Technology (Amendment) Act, 2012

(ii) Indian Institutes of Management (IIM): Indian Institutes of Management (IIM) Act 2017 and Indian Institutes of Management (IIM) Rules 2018.

(iii) Indian Institute of Information Technology(IIIT): Indian Institute of Information Technology (IIIT) Act, 2014; and Indian Institute of Information Technology (IIIT) (Public-Private Partnership) Act, 2017 ; Indian Institutes of Information Technology (Amendment) Act, 2020

(iv) National Institute of Technology (NIT): National Institutes of Technology, Science Education and Research Act, 2007 ; The National Institutes of Technology (Amendment) Act,2012; The National Institutes of Technology, Science Education and Research (Amendment) Act,2014

(v) IISER: The National Institute of Technology, Science Education and Research Act, 2007, as amended in 2012.

(vi) School of Planning and Architecture (SPA): School of Planning and Architecture Act, 2014 and School of Planning and Architecture Statues, 2016. The Architects Act, 1972 and Minimum Standards of Architecture Education Regulations, 2020; The Apprentices Act, 1961

(vii)   Sanskrit Language Institutions: Central Sanskrit University Act, 2020

(viii)   Auroville Foundation : Auroville Foundation Act, 1988

(ix) All India Council for Technical Education : The All India Council for Technical Education Act, 1987

(x) University Grants Commission (UGC): University Grants Commission Act, 1956 . Central Universities : The Central Educational Institutions (Reservation in Admission) Act, 2006

(xi)   The Central Universities Act, 2009

(xii)   Central Universities (Amendment) Act, 2019

(xiii)   Sikkim University Act, 2006

(xiv)   Tripura University Act, 2006

(xv)   Indira Gandhi National Tribal University Act, 2007

(xvi)   Central Sanskrit Universities Act, 2020

(xvii)   Central Educational Institutions (Reservation in Teachers Cadre) Act, 2019

(xviii)   The National Commission for Minority Educational Institutions Act, 2004; The National Commission for Minority Educational Institutions (Amendment) Act, 2010

(xix)   Indira Gandhi National Open University Act, 1985

2. OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF THE DEMANDS FOR GRANTS (2023-24) OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION

2.1 The Demands for Grants (2023-24) of the Department of Higher Education have been presented to Parliament under the Demand Number 26. The BE 2023-24 for Ministry of Education is Rs. 1,12,899.47 crore which is around 2.50% of the total budgetary allocations (Rs. 45,03,097.45 crore) for FY 2023-24. Out of which, outlay for Department of Higher Education is ₹ 44094.62 Cr and for Department of School Education & Literacy is Rs. 68,804.85 crore The share of Department of Higher Education in the total outlay of Ministry of Education is Rs. 44,094.62 crore which is 39.05% of the budgetary allocations to the Ministry of Education. Taken as percentage of total budgetary allocations of the Union Government which is Rs. 45,03,097.45 crore, the total outlay under BE (2023-24) for Department of Higher Education is 0.979 % of the total Union Budget. The breakup of the Budgetary allocation for the Department of Higher Education, under Revenue and Capital is as under:-

TABLE- 1

(*Rs. in crore*)

Department and Demand No.	Revenue	Capital	Total
Department of Higher Education; 26	44082.10	12.52	44094.62

2.2. The detailed break-up of the allocation under Scheme and Non-Scheme in Revenue and Capital Heads in BE and RE (2022-23) and BE (2023-24) along with the change/ variation in percentage in allocations and utilization thereof is as under:

TABLE- 2

Allocation of Funds to Department Higher Education in BE & RE (2022-23) and BE (2023-24)

(Rs. in Crore)

| | Actuals 2021-22 | BE 2022-23 | | RE 2022-23 | | BE 2023-24 | | Variations (Percentage) | |
		Scheme	Non-Scheme	Scheme	Non-Scheme	Scheme	Non-Scheme	BE 2022-23 & BE 2023-24	RE 2022-23 & BE 2023-24
Revenue	33994.37	7454.96	33355.38	4774.78	36035.56	6468.03	37614.07	8.02%	8.02%

4

Capital	12.02	0.01	18.00	0.01	18.00	0.00	12.52	(-) 30.48%	(-) 30.48 %
Total	34006.39	7454.97	33373.38	4774.79	36053.56	6468.03	37626.59	8.00%	8.00%
Grand Total	34006.39	40828.35		40828.35		44094.62			8.00%	8.00%

* Source: Demand No. 26

2.3   The budgetary allocations at BE stage under the Demand as a whole, during the last three Financial Years and the budgetary allocation for the Financial Year 2023-24 along with the change/ variation in percentage of BE over the BE of previous year is as under:-

TABLE- 3

(*Rs. in crore*)

FINANCIAL YEAR	Budgetary Allocation at BE Stage	Budgetary Allocation at RE Stage	Percentage variation of BE over previous year BE*
2020-21	39466.52	32900.00	3.00%
2021-22	38350.65	36031.57	-2.83%
2022-23	40828.35	40828.35	6.46%
2023-24	44094.62		8.00%

*For 2019-20, the BE was Rs. 38317.01

2.4   Out of the Total BE of Rs. 44094.62 Cr. in 2023-24, budgetary allocation for Establishment, Autonomous Bodies (ABs), and Schemes is as under:-

(i)   Establishment: Rs.290.85 Cr.

(ii)   Autonomous Bodies (ABs) : 37335.74 Cr.

(iii)   Schemes : Rs. 6468.03 Cr.

a. Centrally Sponsored: Rs. 1500 Cr.

b. Central Sector: Rs. 4968.03 Cr

2.5   The Committee observes that in the FY 2022-23, the BE was Rs. 40828.35 Cr, which was kept same in RE 2022-23. BE for the next year 2023-24 has been kept at Rs.44094.62 Cr.

2.6 The details of projections of funds made and allocated in BE (2023-24) for schemes/projects under the Department and percentage change/variations over BE/RE (2022-23) are as under:

TABLE- 4

(Rs. in Crore)

S. No.	Name of the Unit (s)/Scheme (s)	Actual 2021-22	BE 2022-23	RE 2022-23	Projections to MoF for 2023-24	BE 2023-24	Variations (in percentage)	
							BE 23-24 over RE 22-23	BE 23-24 over projections 23-24
I	**Establishment Expenditure of the centre**							
1.	Secretariat- Social Services	**105.88**	154.17	159.78	164.23	164.23	2.79%	
2.	Directorate of Hindi	**25.81**	36.00	36.00	39.77	39.77	10.47%	
3.	Commission for Scientific and Technical Terminology	**8.47**	12.00	12.00	15.00	13.00	8.33%	**-13.33%**
4.	Central Institute of Indian Languages, Mysore and Regional Language Centers	**39.23**	60.00	51.50	83.65	61.37	19.17%	**-26.63%**
5.	Educational Institutions Abroad*	**8.44**	11.21	11.21	12.48	12.48	11.33%	
	Total- Establishment Expenditure of the centre	**187.82**	**273.38**	**270.49**	**315.13**	**290.85**	7.53%	**-7.70%**
	SCHEMES							
II	**Central Sector Schemes**							
	Higher Education							
1.	National Research Professors	0.38	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27		

No.	Name							
2.	Establishment of Multi- Disciplinary Research Universities including Central University of Himalayan Studies (CUHS), creation of Centres of Excellence & National Centre for Excellence in Humanities		0.01	0.01	0.01		-100.00%	**-100.00%**
3.	Higher Education Financing Agency (HEFA)		0.01	0.01	0.01		-100.00%	**-100.00%**
4.	World Class Institutions	1046.31	1700.00	1200.00	1700.00	1500.00	25.00%	**-11.76%**
5.	Prime Minister's Girls' Hostel		20.00	5.00	20.00	10.00	100.00%	**-50.00%**
6.	Indian Knowledge Systems	10.00	10.00	20.00	10.00	20.00		**100.00%**
7.	Glue Grant for Higher Education Institutions		10.00		10.00	10.00		
	Total-Higher Education	**1056.69**	**1740.29**	**1225.29**	**1740.29**	**1540.27**	25.71%	**-11.49%**
	Student Financial Aid							
8.	Interest Subsidy and Contribution for Guarantee Fund	1385.21	1400.00	1070.00	1300.00		-100.00%	**-100.00%**
9.	**Scholarship for College and University Students**	**191.96**	**252.85**	**243.00**	**255.00**		-100.00%	**-100.00%**
9.01	Scholarship for College and University Students	191.96	251.85	242.00	254.00		-100.00%	**-100.00%**
9.02	Indian Scholars Going abroad against Scholarships offered by foreign Govt.		1.00	1.00	1.00		-100.00%	**-100.00%**
10.	Special Scholarship Scheme for Jammu and Kashmir	184.00	225.00	200.00	200.00		-100.00%	**-100.00%**
11.	PM-Uchhatar Shiksha Protsahan					1554.00		
12.	PM Research	111.19	200.00	300.00	450.00	400.00	33.33%	**-11.11%**

	Fellowship							
	Total-Student Financial Aid	**1872.36**	**2077.85**	**1813.00**	**2205.00**	**1954.00**	7.78%	**-11.38%**
	Digital India- e-Learning							
13.	National Mission in Education through ICT	85.51	400.00	400.00	496.40	400.00		**-19.42%**
14.	Setting of Virtual Classrooms and Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs)	80.33						
15.	e-Shodh Sindhu	150.00						
16.	Higher Education Statistics And Public Information System (HESPIS)	2.06	10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00		
17.	National Digital Library	4.88						
18.	National Academic Depository		0.10					
19.	PM e-Vidya		0.01					
20.	Academic Bank of Credits	28.79	10.90	5.00	14.00	10.00	100.00%	**-28.57%**
	Total-Digital India-e-Learning	**351.57**	**421.01**	**415.00**	**520.40**	**420.00**	1.20%	**-19.29%**
	Research & Innovation							
21.	National Initiative for Design Innovation	4.47	17.80	17.80	17.80	10.00	-43.82%	**-43.82%**
22.	Startup India Initiative in Higher Educational Institutions	29.32	60.00	40.00	60.00	11.21	-71.98%	**-81.32%**
23.	Unnat Bharat Abhiyan	6.55	12.60	12.60	11.80	9.40	-25.40%	**-20.34%**
24.	Implementation of the IMPRINT Research Initiative (IMPacting Research INnovation & Technology)	3.54	10.00	10.00	10.00	5.00	-50.00%	**-50.00%**
25.	Impactful Policy Research in Social Science (IMPRESS)		17.26	0.25	0.01		-100.00%	**-100.00%**

26.	Scheme for Promotion of Academic and Research Collaboration(SPARC)		74.00	70.59	211.59	50.00	-29.17%	**-76.37%**
27.	Scheme for Transformational and Advanced Research in Sciences (STARS)	10.56	25.00	25.00	84.70	25.00		**-70.48%**
28.	Multidisciplinary Education and Research Improvement in Technical Education-EAP (MERITE)	2.00	2.00	9.00	500.00	100.00	1011.11%	**-80.00%**
	Total-Research & Innovation	**56.44**	**218.66**	**185.24**	**895.90**	**210.61**	13.70%	**-76.49%**
29.	Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya National Mission on Teachers and Teaching (PMMMNMTT)	23.38	95.00	25.00	105.00	45.00	80.00%	**-57.14%**
30.	National Institutional Ranking Framework	3.00	4.00	4.00	4.50	4.50	12.50%	
31.	Global Initiative for Academic Network (GIAN)		10.00	10.00	13.75	10.00		**-27.27%**
32.	Technical Education- Quality Improvement Programme of Government of India (EAP)	34.68						
33.	Programme for Apprenticeship Training- Scholarships & Stipends/ National Apprenticeship Training Scheme	96.75	500.00	400.00	440.00	440.00	10.00%	
34.	Study in India	15.00	25.00	25.00	25.00	25.00		
35.	**Planning, Administration & Global Engagement**							
35.01	Initiatives for Global Engagement	26.20	65.00	61.00	67.25	65.00	6.56%	**-3.35%**

35.02	National Monitoring Committee for Minority Education		0.35		0.35			**-100.00%**
35.03	Expenditure on Seminars, Committees Meetings etc. /TA/DA to Non-Official Members	0.04	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.60		
35.04	Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute	0.08	7.16	3.00	7.16	7.16	138.67%	
35.05	Refund of Income Tax and Customs Duty to United States Education Foundation in India	0.75	1.64	1.64	1.64	1.64		
35.06	Contribution to UNESCO	21.70	21.70	27.50	27.50	27.50		
35.07	Deputation and Delegation to UNESCO Conferences etc.	0.12	0.80	0.80	0.80	0.80		
35.08	Visit of Foreign Delegation to India		0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15		
35.09	Holding of meetings of Committees/ Conference and organisations of exhibition in furtherance of UNESCO's aims and objectives		0.30	0.30	0.30	0.30		
35.1	Asian Institute of Technology, Bangkok	0.58	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50		
35.11	Commonwealth of Learning	12.00	12.00	12.00	12.00	12.00		
	Planning, Administration & Global Engagement	**61.47**	**110.20**	**107.49**	**118.25**	**115.65**	7.59%	**-2.20%**
36.	**Champion Services Sector Scheme-**Education Services-Internationalization of Higher Education	95.65	200.00	200.00	200.00	200.00		
37.	ASEAN Fellowship	**1.03**	10.00	3.00	10.00	3.00		**-70.00%**
	Total- Central Sector Schemes/ Projects	**3668.02**	**5412.01**	**4413.02**	**6278.09**	**4968.03**	12.58%	**-20.87%**
II	**Centrally**							

	Sponsored Schemes						
1.	National Education Mission: Rashtriya Uchhatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA)	242.34	2042.95	360.67	2891.24	1500.00	315.89%	**-48.12%**
	Other Transfer to States						
2.	Improvement in Salary Scale of University & College Teachers	10.00	0.01	1.10			-100.00%	
	Total- Schemes	**3920.36**	**7454.97**	**4774.79**	**9169.33**	**6468.03**	35.46%	**-29.46%**

2.7   Also, details of expenditure incurred as on 31st January, 2023 are as follows:

TABLE- 5

(Rs. in crores)

Year	BE 2022-23	RE 2022-23	Expenditure as on 31.01.2023
2022-23	40828.35	40828.35	32280.80 (79.06% of RE)

2.8   The Committee observes that the overall enhancement in allocation for autonomous bodies(UGC, AICTE, CUs, IITs, NITs, IIITS, IISc etc) is Rs. 4235.74 crores, which is an increase of 12.8 % over their allocation against BE 2022-23. Also, in BE 2023-24 Grant to UGC has been increased by 9.37% i.e. an increase of 459 crores. Further, Grant to Central universities have been increased by 17.66 %, Deemed University by 27%, support to IITs increased by 14%, and to NITs by 10.5% as compared to BE 2022-23. Moreover, IISC, Bangalore's Grant has been increased by 15%. In BE 2023-24, an amount of Rs. 400 crores has been provided for Prime Minister Research Fellowship (PMRF) as compared to Rs. 200 crores in BE 2022-23 i.e. 100% increase. The Committee appreciates the enhanced allocation over the BE 2022-23 under said Heads.

2.9   Further, the Committee takes note of the figures and facts furnished by the Department of Higher Education (at Table- 2 and 4) in respect of the percentage variations between BE 2022-23, RE 2022-23 and BE 2023-24. The Committee notices that broadly there is almost an increase of 8% in BE 2023-24 over RE 2022-23. There is also an increase of around 4.7 % in the allocation to Central Universities, which will receive an estimated Rs. 11,614 crores as against RE 2022-23 of Rs. 11,091.15 crores. There is an increase of 3.3 % for the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), for which the allocation is Rs. 9,661.5 crores.

Finally, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (UGC and AICTE) under the Department receive an allocation of Rs. 5,780 crore which corresponds to an increase of 4.1% over RE 2022-23. The Committee notes that as the country's economy continues to grow and evolve, allocations under the Union Budget 2023 in sectors like Higher Education, which are set to be a game changer in India's development, should be sufficient to enthuse the said sector to provide new and exciting opportunities for those pursuing higher education. The Committee desires that while seeking financial allocations, the Department should focus on the aspirational growth which the Higher Education sector should direct to translate the vision outlined in NEP 2020 into reality. The Committee remains hopeful that using the present allocations, the Department will be able to push various initiatives which will increase access to educational opportunities for all students in higher education, provid enhanced financial aid and additional funding for research and development, which would surely result in more innovations and breakthroughs in the years to come. The Committee, therefore, recommends that proper physical and financial surveys of each of the schemes *vis-a vis* its targets should be carried out in a periodic manner to not only avoid time and cost overrun but also for their effective monitoring and implementation.

2.10 The Committee also takes note of the details of expenditure incurred as on 31ˢᵗ January, 2023 as given at Table- 5. The Committee finds that against the BE 2022-23 and RE 2022-23, the Department has been able to utilize Rs. 32,280.80 crores which is 79.06% of the funds allocated.

2.11 The Department has also informed about the Utilization Certificates (UCs) of the ongoing/stalled Schemes/projects and the steps taken by the Department to set timelines for submission of pending UCs. To ensure submission of UCs by all grantees/ institutions, while preparing the sanction, it is ensured that the clause of UCs is mentioned in the sanction letter to check the status of pending UCs of the concerned scheme and grantee/institution through a computerised Utilization Certificates package. As an outcome of steps taken to clear pending 9453 UCs for F.Y. 2020-21,Grant-In-Aid (GIA)//UC Cell has cleared 9335 UCs and only 118 UCs are pending for F.Y. 2020-21 for which a reminder has been given to all Program Divisions under signature of Deputy Controller of Accounts for early submission.

TABLE- 6

No. of UC's Pending as on 7ᵗʰ Feb 2023	Amount (Rs. in Crore)
2781	835.48

2.12   The Committee while noting the steps taken, is of the view that the pertinent issue of delayed submission of UCs by grantees/ Institutions needs to be addressed by putting in place a mechanism that makes it possible to fix accountability of the officers concerned. The Committee recommends that the reasons given by grantees/ institutions in response to delay in submission also need to be properly scrutinized and verified. The Committee also recommends that the Department should take proactive steps for highlighting the status of each grantee/institution and pendency of UCs against it on a public platform or through regular reminders to ensure that this requirement gets fulfilled and to check any laxity on their part.

2.13   While pursuing the information made available by the Department on the Audit observations that have been made by the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG)   on the matters relating to the Department for the years 2020-21, 2021-22 and 2022-23 and the action taken thereon, the Committee notes that names of many reputed Institutions figure thereon. The Committee also notes the topics/current status of the issues which have brought the CAG observations. The Committee notes the various Audit observations that have been made by the Comptroller and Auditor General (CA&G) in respect of various matters relating to the Department and Institutions under its control and observes that many of the mentioned Audit Paras which have raised points towards inadequate understanding or lack of defined SOP being followed by various Institutions while making payments to their officials etc. **The Committee is of the view that while handling the various Audit Paras and responding/resolving them, the Department should also derive necessary learning from them and accordingly, should issue protocol to be followed in such cases.**

2.14 The Committee notes the course of action detailed in the extracts of the working group report of the NITI Aayog pertaining to the Department "INDIA Three Year Action Agenda 2017-18 to 2019-20" and the vision and strategy that is sought to be followed. The Committee also takes note of the defined thrust areas for the Higher Education scenario which are Designation of World Class Universities, Autonomy for top colleges and universities , Reform of the regulatory system – A tiered system of universities , Establish system of project/researcher specific research grants and Increased focus on vocational and profession led education. The action agenda also lists the quantum of achievements which are to be strived for. **The Committee observes that it would be an instructive exercise for the Department to enlist the present progress *vis-a–vis* the**

identified thrust areas and that such a comparative status report be prepared and submitted to the Committee for its assessment/perusal.

2.15   The Committee takes notes of the Annual Plan for the year 2023-24 that has been prepared by the Department with details of each Scheme/sub-scheme, its financial outlay, outputs/ deliverables against the outlay along with the projected medium term outcomes and quarterly financial targets and appreciates the manner in which each component has been identified and listed with its quantative progress targets.

2.16   The Committee notes that during the past three years, a number of studies/ assessments to Schemes/programmes of the Department have been conducted by independent agencies and reports have been submitted. It is also observed that the Reports concern many of the flagship Schemes of the Department like Rashtriya Uchchatar Skisksha Abhiyan (RUSA), Study in India, SPARC, STARS, Unmat Bharat Abhiyan, IMPRINT-I, IMPRINT-II, Uchhatar Avushkar Yojana (UAY), World Class Institutions Scheme. **The purpose of each such evaluation is not only to get an independent view about the scheme but also a critical analysis of its impact and how far the scheme has been able to address its defined goals, the Committee recommends that a Report-wise and its recommendation-wise analysis *vis-a-vis* action taken on the pointed issue be undertaken so that necessary course correction, if needed, can be initiated.**

3. SCHEMES/PROGRAMMES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION

3.1   The Department has informed about the numerous Schemes as outlined in Table-4 which are being run in the various sectors of Higher Education. The Committee notes that the Schemes are broadly categorized into the following broad areas:

- **Centrally Sponsored Schemes:** Rashtriya Uchhatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA)

- **Central Sector Schemes:**
  - a) Institutes of Eminence
  - b) Higher Education Financing Agency (HEFA)
  - c) National Apprenticeship Training Scheme
  - d) Student Financial Aid
  - e) Digital India on- e-Learning
  - f) Research & Innovation
  - g) Planning, Administration & Global Engagement
  - h) Champion Services Sector Scheme-Internationalization of Higher Education
  - i) Technical Education- Quality Improvement Programme of Government of India (EAP)

3.2   The Table below (Table- 7) lists the various budgetary allocations under these Schemes:

TABLE- 7

(Amount in Rs. crores)

S.No.	Name of the Scheme(s)	Actuals 2020-21	Actuals 2021-22	BE 2022-23	RE 2022-23	Actuals as on 31.01.2023	BE 2023-24
	Centrally Sponsored Schemes:						
1.	Rashtriya Uchhatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA)	165.2	242.34	2042.95	360.67	290.37	1500
2.	Improvement in Salary Scales of University & College Teachers	622.01	10	0.01	1.1	0	0
	Central Sector Schemes:						
3.	Institutes of Eminence	1016.3	1046.31	1700	1200	901.12	1500
4.	Higher Education Financing Agency (HEFA)	200.00	0	0.01	0.01	0	0

No.	Scheme						
5.	National Apprenticeship Training Scheme	175.00	96.75	500	400	303.75	440
6.	Student Financial Aid	1834.26	1872.36	2077.85	1813	1364.88	1954
7.	Digital India- e-Learning	279.51	351.57	421.01	415	220.58	420
8.	Research & Innovation	209.36	56.44	218.66	185.24	35.77	210.61
9.	Planning, Administration & Global Engagement	59.69	61.48	110.2	107.49	60.51	115.65
10.	Champion Services Sector Scheme-Internationalization of Higher Education	87.21	95.65	200	200	41.01	200
11.	Technical Education-Quality Improvement Programme of Govt. of India(EAP)	596.4	34.68	0	0	0	0
12.	Others	51.2	52.78	184.28	92.28	7.83	127.77
	Total- Schemes	**5296.14**	**3920.36**	**7454.97**	**4774.79**	**3225.82**	**6468.03**

3.3 CENTRALLY-SPONSORED SCHEME: RASHTRIYA UCHCHATAR SHIKSHA ABHIYAN (RUSA)

3.3.1 Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA) is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) of the Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education to strategically address the felt needs of the State higher educational institutions to achieve the objectives of equity, access and excellence along with academic and administrative reforms. It seeks to improve the overall quality of existing State higher educational institutions by ensuring their conformity to prescribed norms and standards and adoption of accreditation as a mandatory quality assurance framework; correct regional imbalances by facilitating access to high quality institutions in rural and semi--urban areas; provide adequate opportunities of higher education to socially and economically deprived communities; and promote inclusion of women, minorities, SC/ST/OBCs and differently-abled persons to ensure equity. Transformative reforms such as governance, academic, affiliation and accreditation reforms are pre-requisites in the implementation of the scheme in State higher educational institutions.

3.3.2   The details of the targets fixed and achievement made in the last 5 years are as follows:

TABLE-8
COMPONENT –WISE TARGET SET AND APPROVALS GIVEN UNDER RUSA IN THE LAST FIVE YEARS DURING THE SECOND PHASE OF RUSA

S. No.	Component Name	Target number of Units	Approved number of Units
1.	Creation of Universities by way of upgradation of Existing Autonomous Colleges	3	3
2.	Creation of Universities by Conversion of Colleges in a Cluster	3	2
3.	Excellence & Quality Enhancement of Universities	10	10
4.	Infrastructure Grants to Universities	50	42
5.	New Model Degree Colleges	70	70
6.	Upgradation of Existing Degree Colleges to Model Colleges	75	75
7.	New Colleges (Professional & Technical)	8	8
8.	Infrastructure Grants to Colleges	750	750
9.	Enhancing Quality & Excellence in Select Autonomous Colleges	70	70
10.	Research, Innovation and Quality Improvement	20	20
11.	Equity Initiatives	15	15
12.	Faculty Recruitment Support	200	187
13.	Faculty Improvement Support	8	8
14.	Preparatory Grants	30	30

3.3.3   As per the present implementation status of the RUSA scheme informed by the Department, a total of 2,972 units have been approved for the total fund of Rs. 14846.82 crores, wherein the Central approved fund is Rs. 9,867.38 crores and the central share released is Rs. 7058.86 crores till 31/01/2022. The total utilization is Rs. 5,804.35 crores till 31/12/2022. The component-wise details are as under:

TABLE- 9

Component-wise details of the target set and the achievement of RUSA 1.0 & 2.0 (till 31/01/2023)

S. No.	Component Name	Unit cost ceiling	RUSA 1.0		RUSA 2.0		Total Units Approved	Total Amount Approved	Central Share Approved	Central Share Released
			Targets	Approvals	Targets	Approvals				
1.	Creation of Universities by Conversion of Colleges in a Cluster	55	35	8	3	2	10	550.00	396.00	259.88

2.	Creation of Universities by way of Upgradation of Existing Autonomous Colleges	55	45	8	3	3	11	605.00	363.00	243.25
3.	Enhancing Quality and Excellence in Select Autonomous Colleges	5	Not in RUSA 1.0	Not in RUSA 1.0	70	70	70	350.00	211.50	94.23
4.	Enhancing Quality and Excellence in select State Universities	100	Not in RUSA 1.0	Not in RUSA 1.0	10	10	10	1000.00	630.00	265.00
5.	Equity Initiative	5	20	17	15	15	32	147.45	110.05	81.10
6.	Erstwhile MDC		64	64	-	-	64	256.00	102.73	51.68
7.	Faculty Improvement	7	20	7	8	8	15	87.49	60.24	39.18
8.	Faculty Recruitment Support	0.48	5000	25	200	187	212	32.87	29.57	8.48
9.	Infrastructure Grants to Colleges	2	3500	1249	750	750	1999	3996.83	2720.04	2205.70
10.	Infrastructure Grants to Universities	20	150	115	50	42	157	3119.52	1959.02	1701.20
11.	Management Monitoring	1% of Total approvals	-	-	-	-	-	143.96	143.96	35.23

	Evaluation and Research (MMER)								
12.	New Colleges (Professional & Technical)	26	40	29	8	8	37	961.23	716.91	519.96
13.	New Model Degree Colleges	12	60	60	70	70	130	1555.69	1026.92	813.03
14.	Preparatory Grants		35	35	30	30	65	356.00	249.90	162.97
15.	Research, Innovation & Quality Improvement	Rs. 120 cr in RUSA 1.0/Rs. 50 cr in RUSA 2.0	10	3	20	20	23	1037.27	658.05	235.69
16.	Upgradation of Existing Degree College to Model Degree College	4	54	54	75	75	129	512.86	373.17	249.17
17.	Vocationalisation of Higher Education	15	20	8	Not in RUSA 2.0	Not in RUSA 2.0	8	83.55	65.22	49.93
18.	Central Management Monitoring Evaluation and Research (MMER)		-	-	-	-	-	51.10	51.10	43.16
	Grand Total		9053	1682	1312	1290	2972	14846.82	9867.38	7058.85

3.3.4 It has also been submitted that a number of reforms have been undertaken by States subsequent to implementation of RUSA. Since one of the prerequisites of receiving funds under RUSA was setting up of a State Higher Education Council (SHEC), States/UTs which did not have SHEC prior to RUSA have formed it subsequent to RUSA. Furthermore, due to the central support extended to institutes under RUSA, and the focus on quality improvement, the accreditation status in many States has also improved. States/UTs have also stated that due to RUSA improvement can be seen in digitization of Education, skill development programs, industry academia linkages, etc. It has been stated that under RUSA Scheme, universities have been funded under five components as under:

a) Creation of Universities by way of Upgradation of Existing Autonomous Colleges
b) Creation of Universities by Conversion of Colleges in a Cluster
c) Enhancing Quality and Excellence in select State Universities
d) Infrastructure Grants to Universities
e) Research, Innovation & Quality Improvement

3.3.5 The details of approved funds and Utilization under these components are as under:

TABLE- 10

Component-wise details of funds allocated and disbursed to the universities and utilization thereof (till 31/01/2023)

(Amount in Rs. Crores)

S. No.	Component Name	Unit cost ceiling	RUSA 1.0		RUSA 2.0		Total Units Approved	Total Amount Approved	Central Share Approved	Central Share Released	Central Share Utilization (Till 31/12/2022)
			Targets	Approvals	Targets	Approvals					
1.	Creation of Universities by Conversion of Colleges in a Cluster	55	35	8	3	2	10	550.00	396.00	259.88	231.41
2.	Creation of Universities by way of Upgradation of Existing Autonomous Colleges	55	45	8	3	3	11	605.00	363.00	243.25	194.43

No.	Component										
3.	Enhancing Quality and Excellence in select State Universities	100	Not in RUSA 1.0	Not in RUSA 1.0	10	10	10	1000.00	630.00	265.00	188.577
4.	Infrastructure Grants to Universities	20	150	115	50	42	157	3119.52	1959.02	1701.20	1344.715
5.	Research, Innovation & Quality Improvement	Rs. 120 cr in RUSA 1.0/Rs. 50 cr in RUSA 2.0	10	3	20	20	23	1037.27	658.05	235.69	108.975
	Grand Total		240	134	86	77	211	6311.79	4006.07	2705.02	2068.107

3.3.6 From analysis of the above, it is evident that under RUSA 2.0, approvals have been granted in cases of 77 units against total targets of 86 under five components mentioned in the above Table. Under RUSA 1.0, these figures stand at 134 against targets of 240.

3.3.7 The Department has further informed that a total of 11 Units have been approved under RUSA under the component 'Creation of Universities by way of Upgradation of Existing Autonomous Colleges' so far. These include 3 in Karnataka, 2 each in Jharkhand and Odisha, and 1 each in Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Puducherry and Uttar Pradesh. As on date, 9 Colleges have become Universities. The details are as below:

TABLE- 11

STATES	INSTITUTE	DISTRICT	UNIVERSITY
Jharkhand	Jamshedpur Women's College, Jamshedpur	East Singhbhum	Jamshedpur Women's University
Jharkhand	Ranchi College, Ranchi	Ranchi	Dr.Shyam Prasad Mukherjee University
Karnataka	Government Science College Autonomous	Bangalore Urban	Nrupathunga University
Karnataka	Govt. College, Autonomous, Mandya	Mandya	Mandya University
Madhya Pradesh	Pt. S. N Shukla Government PG	Shahdol	Pandit SN Shukla University

	University, Shahdol			
Odisha	R.D. Women's College	Khorda	Rama Devi Women's University
Odisha	G.M. College	Sambalpur	GangadharMeher University
Puducherry	(Pondicherry Engineering College)	Puducherry	Puducherry Technological University
Uttar Pradesh	Harcourt Butler Technology Institute	Kanpur	Harcourt Butler Technology University

3.3.8 **Budgetary Allocations *vis-a-vis* Utilization under RUSA :** The details of actual utilization during 2020-21and 2021-22, BE and RE for F.Y. 2022-23, actual utilization as on 31st January, 2023 and allocation under BE 2023-24 is as under:-

TABLE- 12

(Amount in Rs. Crores)

Rashtriya Shiksha (RUSA)	Uchhatar Abhiyan	Actuals 2020-21	Actuals 2021-22	BE 2022-23	RE 2022-23	Actuals as on 31.01.2023	BE 2023-24
		165.2	242.34	2042.95	360.67	290.37	1500

3.3.9 Department was provided an outlay of Rs. 2042.95 crores in BE 2022-23 under RUSA. However, at RE 2022-23 stage, it was reduced to Rs. 360.67 crores only. Out of this, the Department has been able to utilize only Rs. 290.37 crores as on 31st January, 2023. Under BE 2023-24, it has been increased to Rs. 1500 crores which is more than 300% as compared to allocation under RE 2022-23 stage. However, it is around 26% less allocation at BE 2022-23 under the scheme. In response to these observations, the Department has informed that the BE 2022-23 was primarily sought for funding new projects under the third phase of RUSA. At present, the structure of the new phase of RUSA is under process for finalisation. Thus, in the current FY, only the committed liabilities of the previous phases could be released to the States/ UTs. Further, there were limited proposals for fund release from the States/UTs mainly due to the revised instructions by Ministry of Finance for Centrally Sponsored Schemes and the slow pace of compliance to these instructions by the States/UTs. All these led to a low expenditure of Rs. 290.37 crores in the current FY (i.e. till 14-02-2023). Accordingly, RE 2022-23 was reduced to Rs. 360.67 crores. It has also been submitted that the States/ UTs are having unspent balances lying with them in their Single Nodal Account (SNA) and to increase the pace of utilization of the unspent balances lying with them, this Department has provided flexibility to the States/ UTs, in June, 2022, to transfer funds (within the approved ceilings) among various projects approved in the State, as per the requirement.

This has reduced the unspent balances lying with the States from Rs. 1356.16 crores (as in June, 2022) to Rs. 1080.93 crores (as on 13th February, 2023).

3.3.10 In respect of the structure of the new phase of RUSA, which is under finalization, the Department has informed that the draft EFC Memo has been circulated to the Ministries/ Departments for furnishing comments on 11th January, 2023. Accordingly, it is expected that once the revised structure of RUSA 3.0 is approved in the current financial year, the fund will be released against fresh proposals of RUSA Phase 3 and hence as per draft EFC Memo, funds to the tune of Rs. 4743.63 crores have been earmarked for FY 2023-24. The finance division has allocated Rs. 1500 crores as BE 2023-24. The expenditure will be incurred on providing grants to existing and new institutions, as per the scheme approvals. The details of the proposed BE 2023-24 is as given below:

TABLE- 13

S. No.	Category of States/UTs	Estimated Budget (Rs. in crores)
1.	General category non-NER States	1190.00
2.	NER States	150.00
3.	UTs with legislature (including J&K and Ladakh)	100.00
4.	UTs without legislature	60.00
TOTAL		**1500.00**

3.3.11 The Committee appreciates the enhanced allocations under RUSA in BE 2023-24 which has witnessed increase of around 300%.

3.3.12 The Committee observes that funds are lying unutilized with the States/UTs due to revised instructions by Ministry of Finance for Centrally Sponsored Schemes regarding the Single Nodal Account (SNA) and the slow pace of compliance to these instructions by the States/UTs. In view of the above facts, the Committee recommends the Department to ensure better coordination with States/UTs and monitor the unutilized funds for improved utilization under RUSA 3.0 to curtail unspent amounts lying with States/UTs.

3.3.13 The Committee appreciates the Department for improved approvals against targets set under various components under RUSA 2.0. However, the Committee also observes that there are reductions in targets for approvals under various components under RUSA 2.0 in comparison to RUSA 1.0 and recommends for increased targets and their approvals under various components for greater utilization of enhanced funds allocated under BE 2023-24.

3.3.14 The Committee notes that the RUSA has been extended till 2026, mainly to encourage the Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs)/ universities under the State Governments to improve their overall educational standards. The Committee appreciates that RUSA has been instrumental in improving the educational ecosystem under the State institutions where the funding to States is on the basis of critical appraisal of State Higher Education. It is also noted that RUSA describes each State's strategy to address issues of equity, access, and excellence in higher education. The Committee hopes that the extension of RUSA scheme will help to increase facilities like infrastructure, maintenance of labs and purchasing of high-quality lab equipment ensuring that quality teaching-learning outcomes take place in the State government HEIs. The Committee, therefore, recommends that the focus of the scheme should shift to Tier II and Tier III cities to also bring the requisite benefits from the scheme to these cities which have great potential.

3.3.15 The Committee further recommends that the Department in co-ordination with the State Governments and Institutions should prepare a monitoring framework for effective implementation of the scheme. The Committee also recommends that the Department should ensure that a periodic stock is taken of the progress made and the improvements that are needed in the scheme. The Committee further recommends that initiatives in consultation with various stakeholders, Vice Chancellors and esteemed academicians that can lead to enhanced learning, better research, and promoting innovation be pushed under the scheme to bring about transformative reforms in the Higher Education System of States through creation of an institutional structure for planning and monitoring at the State level, promoting autonomy in State universities, and improving governance in institutions

3.3.16 The Ministry has also shared the following table showing the ranking of the Institutions of Higher Education.

GRAPH-1

QS RANKING
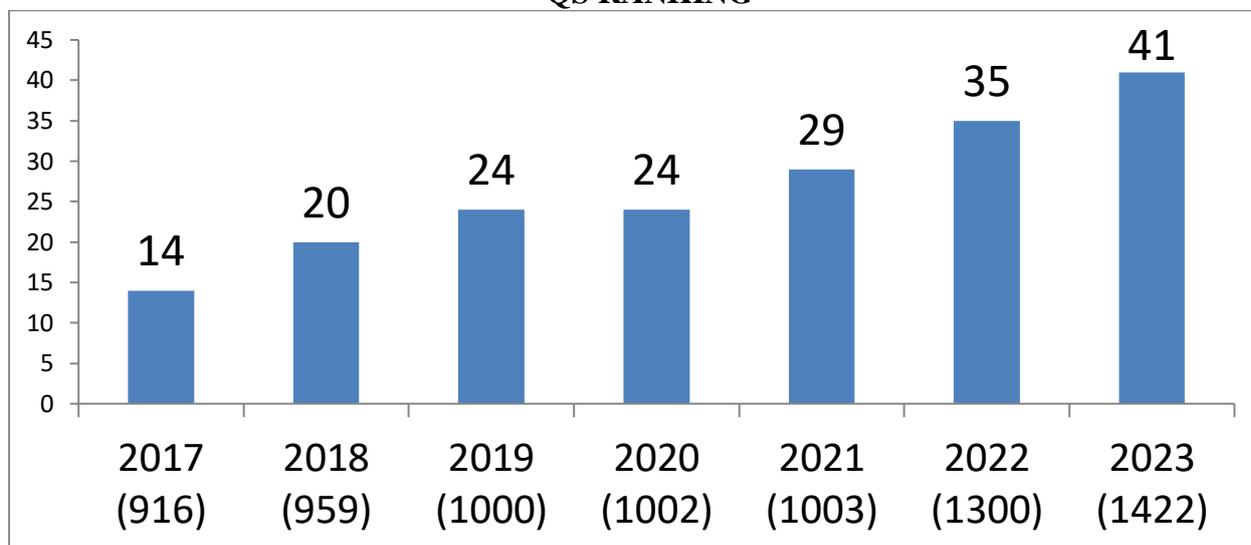
3.3.17   The Department has informed that QS World University Rankings is an annual ranking of Institutions of Higher Education in the World by Quacquarelli Symonds (QS). QS uses six to eight indicators for ranking universities across the globe. The Ranked Indian HEIs are the Indian Higher Education Institutions which have appeared in the ranking list of QS. The Department of Higher Education has organized a number of meetings with HEIs and other stakeholders with an aim to increase rankings of Indian HEIs in QS World University Rankings. **The Committee notes and appreciates that the number of Indian HEIs, over the years have been steadily increasing and at present there are 41 Indian institutions which are finding place in these ranking. The Committee is hopeful that the sustained steps for improving the higher education ecosystem that are being taken by the Department / UGC will lead to inclusion of more Indian institutions in these global rankings. The Committee suggests that to attract international students the Department through UGC should issue guidelines for higher education institutions pertaining to introduction of courses on Indian heritage and culture such as Vedic mathematics, Yoga and Ayurveda which will result into increase in the enrolment for foreign and domestic students keen to unravel and unfurl the reservoir of hidden knowledge in these ancient paradigm of learning that may eventually lead to improvement of world rankings of our institutions as well.**

CENTRAL SECTOR SCHEMES:

3.4   Institutes of Eminence (IoE)/ World Class Institutions:

3.4.1   The Department has informed that World Class Institutions scheme was launched in the year 2017 with an objective of enabling higher education institutions in India to have world class academic and research facilities. A major objective of the scheme is also to bring about improvement in the global rankings of the institutions. The scheme was launched to identify 20 'Institutions of Eminence' (IoE) (10 each from public and private category) with a budget outlay of Rs. 10,000 Crore – for support to public institutions - for a period of 5 years. So far, 08 public institutions and 04 private institutions i.e. 12 higher education institutions in the country have been granted the status of Institution of Eminence. The Department has further informed that the private institutions are issued a Letter of Intent which is valid for a period of 03 years to indicate their readiness to be considered for the status of IoE.

3.4.2   The Department has informed that as per the regulatory framework of the scheme, the public institutions are provided financial support of up to Rs. 1000 Crore – over a period of five years – to implement their plans for achieving the objectives of the scheme and enhance education and research standards. The number of planned activities of the institutions has increased as per the 5-year implementation plans mentioned in the MoUs signed with the Ministry. Further, the institutions have also gathered pace after they faced several restrictions due to COVID-19 in the previous years. As on 31.01.2023, 08 public institutions and 04 private institutions have been notified as Institutions of Eminence. The details are as below,

Public Institutions:

F.Y. 2018-19: Indian Institute of Technology-Delhi, Indian Institute of Technology-Bombay and Indian Institute of Science-Bangalore.

F.Y. 2019-20: Indian Institute of Technology-Madras, Indian Institute of Technology-Kharagpur, Banaras Hindu University, University of Hyderabad and University of Delhi.

Private Institutions:

F.Y. 2020-21: Manipal Academy of Higher Education, Birla Institute of Technology and Science and O.P. Jindal Global University.

F.Y. 2022-23: Shiv Nadar University.

It has been submitted that efforts at various levels are underway to grant IoE status to remaining 02 public institutions and 05 private institutions while 01 has expressed its inability to comply with the conditions of the letter of intent.

3.4.3 On the financial front, Rs. 3428.12 Crore (approximately) have been sanctioned to 08 public IoEs as on 31.12.2022 since the inception of the scheme. Further, in the QS World University Rankings-2023, 11 IoEs have secured a rank while 05 public IoEs are in top-300 of global education institutions. The amount under "World Class Institutions" has been increased by 25% from Rs.1200 Crore in RE (2022-23) to Rs. 1500.00 Crore in BE (2023-24).

3.4.4 The details of actual utilization during 2020-21and 2021-22, BE and RE for F.Y. 2022-23, actual utilization as on 31st January, 2023 and allocation under BE 2023-24 is as under:-

TABLE- 14

(Amount in Rs. Crores)

Institutes of Eminence	Actuals 2020-21	Actuals 2021-22	BE 2022-23	RE 2022-23	Actuals as on 31.01.2023	BE 2023-24
	1016.3	1046.31	1700	1200	901.12	1500

3.4.5 The Committee observes that an outlay of Rs. 1700 crores in BE 2022-23 was provided under Institutions of Eminence. However, at RE 2022-23 stage, it was reduced to Rs. 1200 crores. Out of this, the Department has been able to utilize only 75% of the allocated funds under RE 2022-23, as on 31st January, 2023. Under BE 2023-24, it has been increased to Rs. 1500 crores which is more than 25% as compared to allocation under RE 2022-23 stage. However, it is around 12% less than allocation at BE 2022-23 under the scheme.

3.4.6 The Committee observes and appreciates the impressive utilization under IoE which is 75% of RE 2022-23 during first three quarters of the current fiscal year. The Committee also appreciates the enhanced allocation for IoE, which is Rs. 1500 crs. (BE 2023-24) as compared to Revised Estimates (2022-23) of Rs. 1200 crs.

3.4.7 The Committee notes that World-class universities play key roles in creating and disseminating knowledge, educating a highly skilled workforce for technological and intellectual leadership, and serving the needs of society and thus the scheme serves the purpose of support and recognition towards such efforts. The Committee appreciates the extension of the scheme and recommends that it can be reassessed by the Department/UGC,

so that, it is suitably realigned with the visions of NEP 2020 and modifications required, if any, be addressed.

3.4.8 The Committee also recommends that while considering the institutions for the recognition as an IoE, factors like internationalization, eminent faculty inter disciplinary nature, multi-disciplinary research character, innovation ecosystem, transformational research outputs, etc., be also taken into account as these criteria will be helpful in placing these institutions on the international fora.

3.4.9 The Committee also recommends the Department to consider seeking additional allocations under the scheme at the RE stage in case a view emerges that more Institutions can be considered for recognition as IoEs which will lead these institutions to emerge as World Class Institutions that can help in quest for India emerging as a global academic hub.

3.4.10 The Committee notes that efforts at various levels are underway to grant IoE status to remaining two public institutions and five private institutions while one institution has expressed its inability to comply with the conditions of the letter of intent. The Committee, therefore, recommends that the process for granting status of IoEs be accelerated, so that, the remaining institutions also get the IoE status at the earliest. The Committee also directs that a status note on each of the two public institutions, five private institutions which are being considered for IoE status be placed before the Committee for its perusal.

3.5   HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCING AGENCY (HEFA)

3.5.1   The Department has informed that HEFA had been formed as a Joint Venture company of the Ministry of Education (then MHRD), Government of India and Canara Bank incorporated on 31st May 2017. HEFA is registered under Section 8 [Not-for-profit] of the Companies Act 2013 as a Union Government company and as Non–deposit taking NBFC (NBFC-ND-Type II) with RBI. After crossing the asset size of Rs. 500 Cr, HEFA is now a "Systemically Important NBFC." HEFA is formed as main objective of financing to Centrally Funded Educational Institutions located across India for improving quality educational infrastructure.

3.5.2.   The vision of HEFA is to enable India's premier educational institutions to excel and reach the top in global rankings by financing and building world class infrastructure including R&D Infra.

3.5.3   The Mission of HEFA is to provide timely finance at competitive interest rates for capital assets creation in India's educational institutions and supplement it with grants by channelizing CSR funds from the corporate and donations from others. The objectives of HEFA are as follows:

- Substantially increasing funding for creating quality educational infrastructure.
- To shift from a system of block budgetary grants to a project based approach.
- Timely completion of the infrastructure projects by addressing issues of shortfall of

funds and by regular project monitoring systems.

- Avoid parking of funds by ensuring just in time release of funds as per the actual expenditure incurred.

3.5.4   The details of actual utilization during 2020-21and 2021-22, BE and RE for F.Y. 2022-23, actual utilization as on 31st January, 2023 and allocation under BE 2023-24 is as under:-

TABLE-15

(Amount in Rs. Crores)

Higher Education Financing Agency (HEFA)	Actuals 2020-21	Actuals 2021-22	BE 2022-23	RE 2022-23	Actuals as on 31.01.2023	BE 2023-24
	200.00	0	0.01	0.01	0	0

3.5.5   The purpose behind allocation of Rs. 1 lakh under BE and RE 2022-23 under HEFA and for NIL allocation under BE (2023-24), as informed by the Secretary is that HEFA is a Section-8 Non Banking Financial Company (NBFC) setup for providing loans to Centrally Funded Higher Educational Institutions (CFHEIs) for construction of infrastructure projects. Government of India has equity contribution in the company. The present equity contribution of the Govt. in HEFA is sufficient to meet the current infrastructure requirement of the institution. Therefore, a token allocation in 2022-23 and no allocation under BE 2023-24 has been made.

3.5.6   The Department also informed that subsequently, in 2018, as a part of "RISE (Revitalising Infrastructure and Systems in Education) by 2022" initiative in the Budget 2017-18, Government approved the expansion in the scope of HEFA to include Kendriya Vidalayas, Navodayas, AIIMs, besides Higher Education Institutions. Towards this end, the authorised capital of HEFA was enhanced from Rs.2000 crores to Rs. 10,000 crores of which the Government equity is Rs. 6,000 crore and Canara Bank would contribute 10% of the Government stake. At present, paid – up capital is Rs. 5293.75 Crores (MoE - Rs. 4812.50 Crores, Canara Bank – Rs. 481.25 Crores). HEFA was also authorized to raise additional leverages through debt; either by floating bonds or direct borrowings. The shareholding pattern of HEFA is given as under:

Shareholder	Amount (Rs. in Crores)	Shareholding %
MoE, Govt. of India	4812.50	90.91
Canara Bank	481.25	9.09
Total	5293.75	100.00

3.5.7   It was further informed that the paid-up capital of HEFA as on date is Rs. 5293.75 crores (GoI Rs. 4,812.50 Cr; Canara Bank Rs. 481.25 Cr). HEFA was expected to show to the tune of Rs. 100,000 crore by 2022 under RISE by 2022. However, cumulatively as on 31st December, 2022

projects worth Rs. 46700.03 crore have been approved by HEFA, for which a loan amount of Rs. 35,253.18 crore have been sanctioned and Rs. 16013.79 crore have actually been disbursed. Outbreak of Covid-19 has dampened the demand, as the construction activities were closed and educational institutions were not in a position to undertake new projects. Based on the different repayment capacities of the institutions to be financed, there are five financing windows as given below:

TABLE- 16

Category of Institution	Repayment of Principal		Interest Servicing	
	By Institution	By GOI	By Institution	By Govt
Window I	100%	-	-	100%
Window II	25%	75%	-	100%
Window III	10%	90%	-	100%
Window IV*	-	100%	-	100%
Window V*	-	100%	-	100%

*As per communication from MoF, there will be no further loan sanctions under Window IV & V and disbursements under existing sanctions have been discontinued *w.e.f* 01.10.2020.

3.5.8 It was also informed that the third party evaluation of HEFA has been carried out by NIPFP and the scope of HEFA is being expanded. Scope of HEFA to include large number of institutions and more number of Banks are under consideration. EFC for modification of the HEFA is under preparation. As informed by the Department, the position of HEFA in terms of sanctions & disbursements to Centrally Funded Institutions as at 31st December, 2022 is as under:

TABLE- 17

Category	Sanctioned Amount (Rs. in Cr)	Disbursed Amount (Rs. in Cr)	No. of Institutions
IIT's	13715.82	6057.92	22
AIIMS & MoHFW	8588.33	4548.08	12
NIT's	3005.83	1229.80	17
IIM's	2831.70	1692.93	7
Central Univ.	4259.22	1731.04	27
Others	2852.28	754.02	16
TOTAL	**35253.18**	**16013.79**	**101**

3.5.9 It was further informed that as on 31st December 2022, HEFA sanctioned an amount of Rs.35,253.18 Crore and disbursed an amount of Rs.16,013.79 Crore to Centrally Funded Educational Institutions located all over India. Presently HEFA scheme is under renewal. Third party evaluation report of HEFA has been submitted and HEFA scheme modification is in progress to widen the scope for financing under HEFA.

3.5.10 Further, in September, 2020, Department. of Expenditure, MoF reviewed the funding pattern of HEFA and suggested modification/rationalization of HEFA Windows, by closing two of its windows (namely windows-IV & V), which had provision of 100% repayment of principal and interest through grants. It was advised to fund such institutions through budgetary grants, instead of HEFA loan. Since then, institutions falling under windows- IV & V are funded through budgetary grants, than HEFA, without compromising their infrastructure requirements.

3.5.11 As informed by the Department, the position of HEFA in terms of projects sanctioned to Centrally Funded Institutions as on September, 2022 is given below:

TABLE- 18

Percentage of work completed	Window Category			No of Projects
	I	**II**	**III**	
100% Completed	57	10	40	**107**
>=76% to <100%	23	14	37	**74**
>=51% to <=75%	20	6	13	**39**
>=25% to <=50%	10	4	31	**45**
Below 25%	28	10	32	**70**
To Start	15	10	18	**43**
TOTAL	**153**	**54**	**171**	**378**

3.5.12 The Committee was also informed that as on September, 2022, HEFA has sanctioned 378 projects related to Infrastructure, Equipment & Machinery for Research development to Centrally Funded Institutions located all over India under Window I, II & III categories only. Out of 378 projects, 107 projects have been successfully completed and another 74 projects are on the verge of completion shortly.

3.5.13 The Committee notes that as on 31st December, 2022, projects worth Rs. 46700.03 crore have been approved by HEFA for which a loan amount of Rs. 35,253.18 crore has been sanctioned and Rs. 16013.79 crore has actually been disbursed. The Committee agrees with the contention of the Department that outbreak of Covid-19 has dampened the demand, as the construction activities were closed and educational institutions were not in position to undertake new projects which resulted in approval of loans worth Rs. 35,253.18 crore, so far, falling short of the Government's target. The Committee, therefore, recommends that the Department should undertake sincere efforts to sanction more loans to mobilize the resources at the fullest, ensure speedy disbursal of sanctioned loans and to achieve targets in a time-bound manner during 2023-24. The Committee further recommends to expedite the revision of the HEFA scheme and notify it at the earliest to widen the scope for financing under HEFA.

3.6 NATIONAL APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING SCHEME

3.6.1 The Department has informed that the scheme 'Programme for Apprenticeship Training-Scholarships & Stipends' has been renamed as 'National Apprenticeship Training Scheme (NATS). The Committee notes that NATS is one of the flagship programmes of Government of India for Skilling Indian Youth. It is a one year programme equipping technically qualified youth with practical knowledge and skills required in their field of work. The Apprentices are imparted training by the organizations at their place of work. Trained Managers with well developed training modules ensure that Apprentices learn the job quickly and competently. During the period of apprenticeship, the apprentices are paid a stipend amount, 50% of which is reimbursable to the employer from Government of India. At the end of the training period the apprentices are issued a Certificate of Proficiency by Government of India which can be registered at all employment exchanges across India as valid employment experience. The apprentices are placed for training at Central, State and Private organizations which have excellent training facilities.

3.6.2 The details of actual utilization during 2020-21and 2021-22, BE and RE for F.Y. 2022-23, actual utilization as on 31st January, 2023 and allocation under BE 2023-24 is as under:-

TABLE - 19

(Amount in Rs. Crores)

	Actuals 2020-21	Actuals 2021-22	BE 2022-23	RE 2022-23	Actuals as on 31.01.2023	BE 2023-24
National Apprenticeship Training Scheme	175.00	96.75	500	400	303.75	440

3.6.3 The Committee observes that currently, two apprenticeship schemes are in implementation, namely, National Apprenticeship Training Scheme (NATS) by the Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education (MoE) and National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (NAPS) by the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE). NATS implements apprenticeship training for engineering graduates, diploma holders and general stream graduates; while NAPS is meant for the rest of the categories of apprentices. The Committee notes that though there may be a demarcation in target group of beneficiaries, however, both schemes seem to be aimed towards a similar objective. Noting that the convergence of both the schemes will be beneficial, the Committee recommends that

a joint analytical evaluation study be undertaken by the Department in coordination with MSDE of both the schemes, their objectives and the level to which they would get fulfilled if a single scheme was implemented as that will be in consonance with the thrust on integration of education and skill development which the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 envisages.

3.7 STUDENT FINANCIAL AID

3.7.1 The Committee notes that under the category of "Student Financial Aid" the various Schemes towards which allocation has been made are as under:

TABLE- 20

(Amount in Rs. Crores)

S.No.	Name of the Scheme	Actuals 2020-21	Actual 2021-22	BE 2022-23	RE 2022-23	Actuals as on 31.01.2023	BE 2023-24
1.	**Pradhan Mantri-Uchhatar Shiksha Protsahan Yozna (PM-USP):**						1554
1.a	Interest Subsidy and Contribution for Guarantee Fund	1,476.79	1,385.21	1,400.00	1,070.00	863.69	
1.b	Scholarship for College and University Students	166.1	191.96	251.85	242	149.93	
1.c	Special Scholarship Scheme for Jammu and Kashmir	128	184	225	200	151.25	
2.	PM Research Fellowship	63.28	111.19	200	300	200	400
3.	Indian Scholars Going abroad against Scholarships offered by foreign Government	0.09	0	1	1	0.02	0
	Total-Student Financial Aid	**1,834.26**	**1,872.36**	**2,077.85**	**1,813.00**	**1,364.88**	**1954**

3.7.2   The Committee observes that allocation of Rs. 1554 crore in BE 2023-24 has been made for the Pradhan Mantri-Uchhatar Shiksha Protsahan Yozna(PM-USP) and Rs. 400 crore towards PM Research Fellowship. PM-USP subsumes three prior heads, the largest of which includes subsidies for interest payments for education loans, and a fund for guarantees against defaulters. Other heads subsumed under PM-USP are scholarships for college and university students and special scholarships for students from Jammu and Kashmir. It is further observed that the allocation for PM-USP is around 2.7% higher than the RE 2022-23 allocation.

3.7.3   On a query about underutilization under the Pradhan Mantri Uchchatar Shiksha Protsanhan [PM-USP] Yojana, the Department has informed that in Central Sector Scheme of Scholarship for College and University Students, less number of applications were received from the students from states in North Eastern region. This might be due to the reason that some of the scholarships provided to NER students by UGC and respective State governments are more beneficial to the students. Therefore, as one student can avail only one scholarship at a time, students are taking the benefits under the scheme which is more beneficial to them. In Central Sector Interest Subsidy Scheme (CSIS), for all the years, allocation under the General Head was fully utilized. The unspent balance was there under SC/ST Budget Heads only which is due to less no. of claims under CSIS scheme in respect of SC/ST students. The reason may be availability of other lucrative scholarship/Fee-reimbursement schemes for this category of students, thus restricting them from availing Education Loan.

3.7.4   The Department further informs that less number of applications were received from the students belonging to SC/ST category and from certain States and this might be due to the reason that some of the scholarships provided to the SC and ST students by the other Ministries are more beneficial to the students. Therefore, as one student can avail only one scholarship at a time, students are taking the benefits under the scheme which is more beneficial to them. The utilization over years has improved at the all India level. During renewal process also, some of the students do not apply for scholarships. This might occur as a student who is undergoing a general course of study in the first year has changed to a professional/ technical course afterwards and is availing some other scholarship which is more beneficial to the student. Besides this, there is delay in verification of students' applications on NSP as the applications remain pending with the Institutes. Since the institutes are not under the ambit of State Education Board, the requests of the SEBs to the institutions for timely verification have less effect.

3.7.5   The Department has also mentioned the efforts that have been made to overcome the problem and in this respect they have stated that from the academic year 2019-20, to optimize

scholarship quota, while maintaining the overall quota at the national level, the applications over and above the specified quota of the States were taken up against the available vacant slots of the other States and it may be seen that the total utilisation has improved over the years. Also, a number of new Initiatives have been taken by the Department which are:

i. Rate of scholarship has been increased from Rs. 10,000 per annum to Rs.12,000 per annum for the first three years.

ii. State will nominate the Higher Education Department or any other Agency/ Official as State Nodal Agency for verification of fresh as well as renewal applications, to avoid delay in verification of applications.

iii. No debarment for successive renewal due to delay in renewal or verification.

iv. Rationalization of scholarship slots based on stream of study to 3:3:1with respect to Humanities: Science: Commerce respectively, based on latest available All India Survey of Higher Education (AISHE) data.

v. Simplification of renewal process for students in case they are changing the institutions.

vi. The inter-operability is allowed among Gender (Female/Male) and State Quota.

3.7.6 The Committee notes the submissions of the Department and recommends that a study of the various scholarship schemes given for higher education, along with the categories of beneficiaries, state-wise, SC/ST, gender-wise etc across the various Ministries of Government of India be carried out to evaluate the amounts and other benefits under each scheme. This will help in coherent formulation of policies and identification of groups to whom targeted scholarships can be planned in a better way in future bringing the scholarships offered by other Ministries at par at least.

3.7.7 The Committee recommends to increase the amount under various scholarship programmes taking into account the real expenses borne by students in view of the fact that most beneficiaries of the Scheme are primarily students from low-income and socially disadvantaged groups.

3.7.8 PM Research Fellowship (PMRF) Scheme, in order to attract best talent for undertaking research in the frontier areas of science & technology, preferably those addressing the national requirements, a maximum of 3,000 most talented students from all recognized Universities/Institutes will be selected as per PMRF guidelines to enroll in the Ph.D program in IITs/IISc/IISERs and selected CUs/NITs (in NIRF top 25) and would be incentivized by providing attractive rates of fellowship @ Rs.70,000/- per month for the first two years, Rs.75,000/- per month for the 3rd year, and Rs.80,000/- per month in the 4th and 5th years. In addition, a research grant of Rs. 2.00 lakh per year for a period of 5 years will be given to each

fellow to meet the cost of presenting research papers. The Scheme has been appraised by the EFC and approved by the Union Cabinet in its meeting held on 07.02.2018. As on date, 2560 fellows have been admitted under the scheme, and it is expected that the target of 3000 fellows under the scheme will be achieved in Dec'22 selections and no further selections will be made under the scheme.

3.7.9 The details of actual utilization during 2020-21 and 2021-22, BE and RE for F.Y. 2022-23, actual utilization as on 31st January, 2023 and allocation under BE 2023-24 is as under:-

TABLE - 21

(Amount in Rs. Crores)

PM Research Fellowship	Actuals 2020-21	Actuals 2021-22	BE 2022-23	RE 2022-23	Actuals as on 31.01.2023	BE 2023-24
	63.28	111.19	200	300	200	400

The Committee observes that in BE (2023-24), Rs. 400.00 Crores has been proposed for "PM Research Fellowship" which is an increase of Rs. 100 Crores from RE (2022-23).

3.7.10 The Committee observes and appreciates the Department for enhanced allocations under PM Research Fellowship Scheme in BE 2023-24 to Rs. 400 crores from allocation of Rs. 200 crores which was enhanced to Rs. 300 crores in RE 2022-23. The Committee, recommends that the Department should closely look at the modalities of the Scheme, so that, the Research Ecosystem (ANUSANDHAN) as a whole gets fillip and brain drain of highly talented students could be stopped and the national priorities get aligned in chosen thrust-based and futuristic areas of research.

3.8 DIGITAL INDIA e-LEARNING

3.8.1 The details of various schemes, actual utilization during 2020-21and 2021-22, BE and RE for F.Y. 2022-23, actual utilization as on 31st January, 2023 and allocation under BE 2023-24 under the category of Digital India e-Learning is as under:-

TABLE - 22

(Amount in Rs. Crores)

.No.	Name of the Scheme	Actuals 2020-21	Actuals 2021-22	BE 2022-23	RE 2022-23	Actuals as on 31.01.2023	BE 2023-24
1.	**National Mission in Education through ICT (NMEICT-III):**			400	400	219	400
1.a	National Mission in Education through ICT	36.66	85.51				
1.b	Setting up of virtual classrooms and massive open online courses (MOOCs)	68	80.33				
1.c	e-shodh Sindhu	154.6	150				
1.d	National Digital Library	7.9	4.88				
2.	Higher Education Statistics and Public Information System (HESPIS)	12.34	2.06	10	10	1.55	10
3.	Academic Bank of Credits	0	28.79	10.9	5	0	10
4.	National Academic Depository	0	0	0.1	0	0	0
5.	PM e-Vidya	0	0	0.01	0	0	0
	Total-Digital India- e-Learning	**279.5**	**351.6**	**421**	**415**	**220.6**	**420**

3.8.2 The Committee appreciates the enhancement in allocation under Digital India e-Learning that has increased in BE 2023-24 as compared to RE 2022-23.

3.8.3 The Committee strongly feels that there is a pressing need to ensure that digital education penetrates even further and recommends that the Department should evaluate

the schemes under the "Digital India e-Learning " category to bring them in tune with the objectives which call for developing high-quality electronic content in all local languages to cater to the diversity in the country, build suitable infrastructure for virtual training and laboratories along with high-end skill development courses, create guidelines for online/digital education to tackle the digital divide and to make use of technology for integrating the Indian education system.

3.8.4   The Committee appreciates the measures being taken by the Department to improve digital education in India which will also enable increased digital accessibility among students in rural areas particularly remote villages with access to high-quality education. Also, it has been noted that India's growing embrace of digital education is luring major international ed-tech platforms to provide students with online courses and expand their access to educational options. The Committee therefore, recommends that the Department should focus on identifying the remotest areas which are still left from digital accessibility and to equip students with contemporary and up to date e-learning platforms for preparation of workforce well equipped with industry-based skills and better employability.

3.8.5   The Committee further recommends for development of new cooperative mechanisms between the higher educational institutions/ universities with industry to find ways to support and strengthen digital education initiatives in the country to create a system for income generation for students in order to make them self-sufficient.

3.8.6   The Committee notes that the budgetary allocation under the component Academic Bank of Credits is as under:

TABLE - 23

(Amount in Rs. Crores)

	Actuals 2020-21	Actuals 2021-22	BE 2022-23	RE 2022-23	Actuals as on 31.01.2023	BE 2023-24
Academic Bank of Credits	**0**	**28.79**	**10.9**	**5**	**0**	**10**

3.8.7   The Department has informed that Academic Bank of Credit (ABC), as envisaged in the National Educational Policy (NEP) 2020 is a National-level facility to promote flexibility of curriculum framework and interdisciplinary/multidisciplinary academic mobility of students across the   Higher Education Institutions in the country with appropriate "Credit Transfer"

mechanism. ABC platform would digitally store the academic credits earned by students from various recognized HEIs and facilitates transfer of credit between HEIs on student's request. This will gradually cover all/most of the HEIs and become available for all students of India. The scheme is implemented under the overall supervision of the Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education. The technical implementation/support is given by NeGD (National e-Governance Division) of Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) as per UGC regulation for the same in line with NEP-2020. Credits obtained by undertaking Courses in Registered HEIs during or after the academic year 2021-2022 alone are eligible for credit transfer, credit accrual and credit redemption through Academic Bank of Credits.

3.8.8 The Committee observes that Academic Bank of Credit (ABC), as envisaged in the National Educational Policy (NEP) 2020 is a national-level facility to promote flexibility of curriculum framework and inter-disciplinary/multi-disciplinary academic mobility of students across the higher education institutions in the country with appropriate "Credit Transfer" mechanism. The Committee recommends that the Department should lay great emphasis on popularising the novel concept.

3.9 The Department in respect of Schemes implemented under National Mission on Education through ICT (NMEICT) in Department of Higher Education has informed that the scheme, namely, NMEICT was initiated in 2008-09, with the objective of leveraging the advancement in ICT for taking the knowledge resources to the door steps of learners. Under the NMEICT - Phase - lll scheme, various digital initiatives are being undertaken viz. Study Webs of Active–Learning for Young Aspiring Minds (SWAYAM), Swayam Prabha, National Digital Library (NDL), Virtual Lab, e-Yantra, Free/Libre and Open Source Software for Education (FOSSEE), e Shodh Sindhu (eSS), Shodh Shuddhi, Enterprises Resource Planning (ERP) etc. Information as shared by the Department on these and certain other related Schemes is as under.

3.9.1 The **SWAYAM Prabha** has been conceived as the project for telecasting high quality educational programs through 34 DTH channels on 24x7 basis to reach out to student/learners of India in a most cost-effective manner using two GSAT-15 transponders. It aims to support those students who do not have good learning options like nearby college, sufficient teacher or internet etc. 12 channels – One Channel One Class, are meant for Schools and 22 channels are earmarked for Higher Education. It covers diverse disciplines such as arts, science, commerce, performing arts, social sciences and humanities, engineering, technology, law, medicine, agriculture, etc. Some of the channels also provide live interactions. To facilitate the users, there is SWAYAM Prabha portal

(http://www.swayamprabha.gov.in). Channels are Freely Available on DD Free Dish, Dish TV (Zee) and Jio mobile app. There are 11 lakhs+ subscribers and 5 crores+ views for archival on YouTube. Around 78,000 unique videos of around 51,000 hours have been telecasted since its inception. In the next 5 years, convergence of Swayam and Swayam Prabha has been envisaged. In addition to the existing videos, curriculum based content of 21,000 hours will be developed.

3.9.2 **National Digital Library (NDL),** provides a virtual repository of learning resources with a single-window search facility. This platform supports 11 languages (English, Hindi, Bengali, Gujarati, Odiya, Marathi, Tamil, Kannada, Telugu, Malayan, Assam). 70 % of all the contents are Freely Downloadable. Rest is restricted to be subscribed. A total of 7.93 crore-contents in the form of books, audio books, articles, video/audio lectures, questions, solutions and other learning contents harvested from 378 different sources are available in NDL. A target of 7.5 crore more e-contents on different subjects have been set for the next 5 years.

3.9.3 Under **National Knowledge Network (NKN) scheme**, 1 Gbps NKN connectivity has been given to 601 universities/higher educational institutes on cost sharing basis of 70:25 ratio. The project was completed in 2019 and further extended till March, 2023. Under the next phase of NKN, all the existing institutions would be provided the connectivity.

3.9.4 The vision of the **Virtual Labs** Project is to develop a fully interactive simulation environment to perform experiments, collect data, and answer questions to assess the understanding of the knowledge acquired. In order to achieve the objectives of such an ambitious project, it is essential to develop virtual laboratories with state-of-the-art computer simulation technology to create real world environments and problem handling capabilities. Currently, Virtual Labs are being used by 1686 Universities/Institutions across the country identified as Nodal Centers (NCs).

3.9.5 **e-Yantra** is a project undertaken by IIT Bombay for enabling effective education across engineering colleges in India on embedded systems and Robotics. The training for teachers and students is imparted through workshops where participants are taught basics of embedded systems and programming with the objective of engaging students through exciting hands-on application on mathematics, computer science and engineering principles. All the projects and code are available on www.e-yantra.org as open-source content. e-Yantra also helps colleges to set-up Robotics labs/clubs to make it a part of their academic curriculum. About 440+ Robotics labs have been setup across India.

3.9.6 **Project FOSSEE (Free Open-Source Software for Education)** has been envisaged to promote use of open-source software in educational Institutions. It works through instructional material, such as documentation, textbook companions, awareness programmers, conferences, training workshops, and Internships. Textbook Companion (TBCI) is a collection of code for

solved examples of standard textbooks. About 2,000 college students and teachers have participated in this activity & close to 780 Institutions have been created in Scilab and made available for free download. About 4,392 institutes are using FOSSEE. The targets for next five years are to add 6100 institutes more.

3.9.7 **Shodh Shuddhi** provides access to Plagiarism Detection Software (PDS) to all Universities/Institutions since Sept 1, 2019. The project is being implemented by INFLIBNET Centre. Under PDS scheme, total no. of member institutions are 1056, total users are 121205 and total documents submitted are 17.62 lakhs. The targets for next five years are to add 10.50 lakhs more users under this project.

3.9.8 **ERP software SAMARTH** an Open source, Open standard, Scalable, process automation engine for Universities and HEIs has been initiated to help the HEIs to automate their functions & processes which in turn improve the functioning of these Institutions and bring transparency and quality improvements. The Project is being handled by Delhi University and it is being implemented in 40 Central Universities, 1 NIT, 20 TEQIP III institutes, 2 State Universities and NCERT. 26 lakh+ admission, 4 lakh + application have been processed for recruitment so far.

3.9.9 **Indian Research Information Network System (IRINS)** is the Web-based research information management and network system developed by the Information and Library Network Centre (INFLIBNET). The portal facilitates the academic, R&D organizations, faculty members, and scientists to collect, curate and showcase their scholarly communication activities and provides an opportunity to create the scholarly network. IRINS is available as free software-as-service to the academic and R&D organizations in India. The targets for next five years are to add 1500 institutes more under this system.

3.9.10 **e-Shodh Sindu (eSS)** is a Consortia for Higher Education e-resources to provide access to qualitative electronic resources including full-text, bibliographic and factual databases to academic institutions at a lower rate of subscription. Under the phase II (for the Year 2022), the e-Shodh Sindhu, continued to serve more than 217 universities and 3,200+ colleges covered under 12(B) and 2(F) Sections of the UGC Act and 98 Centrally-funded Technical Institutions (CFTIs) including IITs, IISc, NITs, IIMs, IISERs, IIITs, etc.

3.9.11 **GIAN: Global Initiative for Academic Network** is a Global Initiative for Academic Network (GIAN) in Higher Education which aims at tapping the talent pool of scientists and entrepreneurs, internationally, to encourage their engagement with the institutes of Higher Education in India so as to augment the country's existing academic resources, accelerate the pace of quality reform and elevate India's scientific and technological capacity to global excellence.

3.9.12 The vision of **Indian Knowledge Systems** is to promote interdisciplinary research on all aspects of "Indian Knowledge Systems", preserve, and disseminate "Indian Knowledge Systems" for further research and societal applications.

3.9.13 **Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya National Mission on Teachers and Teaching (PMMMNMTT):** The Central Sector Scheme of PMMMNMTT was launched in December, 2014. The aim of this mission is to provide quality teachers in schools and colleges, attract talented people in the education sector and improve quality in teaching. The mission aims to set the teaching standard so that an organized cadre of professional teachers can be created. The objective of this mission is to develop innovative teaching methods and high level institutional facilities in all the constituent areas of education. The scheme aims at improving the quality of education at all levels by infusing quality and excellence in our teachers and teaching. As regards its current status, the tenure of PMMMNMTT Scheme ended on 31.03.2021. Further, SFC in its meeting held on 19.08.2021, has appraised the scheme and recommended the continuation of PMMMNMTT Scheme for further 5 years i.e. from 2021-2022 to 2025-26 with a total outlay of Rs. 493.68 Cr. Thereafter, as per the direction of Hon'ble Education Minister, two Committees were constituted; one under Chairmanship of VC, IGNOU and another under the Chairman, UGC, to recommend measures for setting up of institutional mechanism for the scheme, which has since submitted their reports. Now, Ministry is in the process of examining and designing the scheme as per the recommendations made in the report of UGC. The Scheme PMMMNMTT is under review and is yet to be finalised.

3.9.14 **Unnat Bharat Abhiyan (UBA)** was launched in September, 2014 for connecting higher education institutions in the country with the society and villages. The aim was to provide practical knowledge/traditional wisdom to the students and faculty of HEIs in addition to bookish knowledge they get in academics. Knowledge transformation is the key & the scheme ensures the reach of our rich culture to the youth. The selected HEIs also work on identification and selection of existing innovating technologies, enabling customization of technologies, or devise implementation method for innovating solutions, as required by the common people. The Scheme has been extended for a further period of five years i.e 01.04.2021 to 31.03.2026 at a financial outlay of Rs.48.53 crores.

3.9.15 IMPacting Research INnovation and Technology (IMPRINT) India Initiative

IMPRINT-II was formulated in 2018 with a slightly modified strategy by merging the schemes IMPRINT-I (implemented up to March, 2022) and Uchhatar Avishkar Yojana (UAY). The projects under IMPRINT-II will be funded jointly by MoE and DST in the ratio of 50:50 by creating a joint

corpus. Other participating Ministries/Industries may volunteer to fund the projects relevant to them. IMPRINT-II is being administered by the IMPRINT-SERB vertical under DST.

3.9.16 Start-up India Initiative for Higher Educational Institutions (SIIHEIs) – Setting up of Research Parks : Complementing the renewed focus of the Government on developing indigenous R&D capabilities, boosting manufacturing and creating a successful startup culture in the country, Research Parks are being established at various IITs/ IISc. A full-fledged Research Park is already functioning in IIT Madras. Research Park at IIT-Kharagpur was inaugurated in August, 2019. Research Parks at IIT Bombay, IIT Delhi, IIT Kanpur, IIT Guwahati, IIT Hyderabad and IISc, Bangalore are in various stages of construction. A Research Park at IIT, Gandhinagar is being funded by Department of Science & Technology (DST) and is near completion.

3.9.17 ASEAN Fellowship Scheme : Pursuant to the announcement made by the Hon'ble Prime Minister during the Plenary Session of the ASEAN India Commemorative Summit held at New Delhi on January 25, 2018, and subsequent appraisal by the Standing Finance Committee (SFC) in its meeting held on 25.07.2019, the competent authority has approved grant of upto 1000 fellowships to students of ASEAN countries to pursue integrated Ph.D programmes in the IITs, at a total outlay of Rs. 300 cr. for 7 years (3 batches). For the students admitted, fellowships will be provided at the same rate as Indian students, along with the yearly research grant, as applicable. The IITs will make provision to cover living expenses of the selected students from their own resources. IIT Delhi is the National Coordinator of this scheme. So far in three rounds, 65 students have been selected under the Scheme but owing to Covid pandemic worldwide, only 35 students have joined their respective institutes in the country and 20 students have dropped after enrolling. Citing laggard response under the scheme, various amendments were proposed under the scheme, such as inclusion of M.Tech/Master programmes, waiver of tuition fees etc. to Ministry of Finance, however the proposal was not agreed to. Further, Ministry of Finance suggested that the scheme may be continued on the same terms and conditions as approved by SFC till 2025-26 and discontinued thereafter.

3.9.18 **NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY 2020 (NEP 2020):** As regards the key initiatives taken by the Department to revamp the Higher Education system of India in line with the NEP 2020, it has been submitted that nearly 674 Universities are on boarded and approximately 45 lakhs students have been registered on the Academic Bank of Credits portal,. Also, guidelines for transforming Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) into multi disciplinary institutions for academic collaboration leading to multi-disciplinary and Holistic Education and optimum utilization of resources have been issued. Guidelines have also been issued for pursuing two academic programmes simultaneously to facilitate multiple pathways for learning involving both formal and

non-formal education modes. Curriculum and Credit Framework for Undergraduate Programme was issued on 12.12.2022 to facilitate flexible choice-based credit system, multidisciplinary approach, and multiple entry and exit options. This will also facilitate students to pursue their career path by choosing the subject/field of their interest. It has further been informed that to facilitate international collaboration, Regulation on Academic Collaboration between Indian and Foreign Higher Educational Institutions to offer Twinning, Joint Degree and Dual Degree Programmes has been issued on 05.05.2022 and at present 49 out of total 230 eligible HEIs are offering such programmes. In order to facilitate smooth and simple admission of international students in higher educational institutions of India, guidelines for admission and supernumerary seats of foreign students in Indian HEIs have been issued on 30.09.2022. This will also promote India as a preferred destination for international students. Also, to facilitate Industry-Academia linkage, Guidelines for engaging Professors of Practice in Universities and Colleges have been issued on 30.09.2022. This will enable development of courses and curriculum to meet the Industry and Societal needs and enable HEIs to work with Industry Experts on Joint Research Projects. The Department has also informed that for the first time for Higher Education National Credit Framework/ National Higher Education Qualification Framework (NHEQF) is ready for release after finalization of National Credit Framework (NCrF). This will enable unfettered movement between Institutions & different Streams; earning credits from different institutions and learning courses through different delivery modes; and facilitate comparability and equivalence of degrees (including foreign degree) thereby enabling mobility. Similarly, for the first time to facilitate students in the admission for Higher Education, Common University Entrance Test was conducted in 13 Languages for admission to 90 Universities in which more than 16 lakhs students appeared. Guidelines for embedding Indian Knowledge System in Higher Education curricula is under finalization. In this aspect following initiatives have already been taken:-

- Provision of awarding minor degree to students who completes 18 to 20 credits in IKS has been made.
- Funded 36 high end interdisciplinary research projects.
- 25 IKS centres focused on Indian languages in 8th Schedule are being established.
- AICTE has permitted 41 engineering courses across 10 states in 8 regional languages.
- 264 books for UG and 1st year Diploma technical books have been translated in 12 scheduled regional languages (Hindi, Marathi, Bengali, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Assamese, Odia, Urdu, Kannada, Gujarati and Punjabi) along with translation of MOOCs courses in these languages.

- The exercise of translating second year engineering and diploma books in 12 regional languages has also been undertaken.

- Around 2000 internship on IKS have been offered.

- More than 8000 HEIs have started adopting IKS into their curriculum and digitization of 1.5 Lakhs book.

- AICTE has also developed a tool called "AICTE Translation Automation AI tool" with a vision to translate English language online courses into eleven different Indian languages for access to a more significant number of students in rural areas.

3.9.19 The Committee takes note of the information furnished by the Department regarding the Budget allocations 2023-24 for Higher Education. The Department has also furnished details of a number of new initiatives planned by it, which are as under:

- **Three Centres of Excellence will be set up in educational institutions to "Make AI in India and Make AI work for India". This is drawing from the fact that NEP 2020 recognizes the role of AI in all sectors of the economy which will require new skill set of the work force and AI has important role to play in the Agriculture, Health, Automobiles, Cyber Security, Smart Home/City Infrastructure, Data Analysis, Speech Recognition, Customer Service, Automated Stock Trading, Online shopping, Machine Translation, Digital Personal Assistance.**

- **Centers of excellence (CoEs) will implement the NEP 2020 vision of multidisciplinary research in agriculture, health and sustainable cities. It will also help premier educational institutions to transform research (ANUSANDHAN) to cutting edge technology needed essentially for a country of our size and diversity.**

- **National Data Governance Policy - unleashes innovation and research by start-ups and academia, a National Data Governance Policy will be brought out. This will help drive 'Anusandhan' across HEIs.**

- **100 labs for developing apps using 5G services will be set up in HEIs, to realize new opportunities, business models and employment potential. Labs will cover among others, apps like Smart Classrooms, Precision Farming, Intelligent Transports Systems and Healthcare. These will provide a fillip to employment, start-ups, businesses and promote innovation & entrepreneurship in our young engineers. Also, attempts to transform engineering education by introducing courses in emerging sector and make the approach multidisciplinary, not only in IITs, NITs and IISERs etc. but in engineering institutions across the country are underway.**

The Committee appreciates the initiatives and recognizing the importance of higher education and its role in advancement of the NEP 2020 vision, understands that much greater influx of funds would be required to translate the proposed initiatives into reality. The Committee, therefore, recommends that the Department should undertake a thorough analysis of its funding requirements, category- wise, scheme-wise and NEP 2020 clause-wise along with the cumulative funding that can be generated through the States and private sector, so that, it can be taken note of and factored towards policy formulation and allocations in future.

3.10 The Committee also takes note that under the "Research & Innovation category", the budgetary allocation against various components is as under:

TABLE - 24

(Amount in Rs. Crores)

S.No.	Name of the Scheme	Actuals 2020-21	Actuals 2021-22	BE 2022-23	RE 2022-23	Actuals as on 31.01.2023	BE 2023-24
1.	National Initiative for Design Innovation	8.73	4.47	17.8	17.8	3.29	10
2.	Startup India Initiative in Higher Educational Institutions	167.5	29.32	60	40	16.02	11.21
3.	Unnat Bharat Abhiyan	6.13	6.55	12.6	12.6	8.456	9.40
4.	Implementation of the IMPRINT Research Initiative (IMPacting Research INnovation & Technology)	0	3.54	10	10	0	5.00
5.	Impactful Policy Research in Social Science (IMPRESS)	12	0	17.26	0.25	0	0
6.	Scheme for Promotion of Academic and Research Collaboration(SPARC)	0	0	74	70.59	0	50
7.	Scheme for Transformational and Advanced Research in Sciences (STARS)	15	10.56	25	25	6	25

8.	Multidisciplinary Education and Research Improvement in Technical Education-EAP (MERITE)	0	2	2	9	2	100
	Total-Research & Innovation	**209.36**	**56.44**	**218.66**	**185.24**	**35.766**	**210.61**

3.10.1 The Committee notes that allocation towards Multidisciplinary Education and Research Improvement in Technical Education-EAP (MERITE) Scheme is as under:

TABLE - 25

(Amount in Rs. Crores)

Multidisciplinary Education and Research Improvement in Technical Education-EAP (MERITE)	Actuals 2020-21	Actuals 2021-22	BE 2022-23	RE 2022-23	Actuals as on 31.01.2023	BE 2023-24
	0	2	2	9	2	100

3.10.2 The Department has informed that MERITE (Multidisciplinary Education and Research Improvement in Technical Education) Scheme has been designed to improve the quality, equity and governance in technical education (engineering and polytechnic) in selected States/ UT, aligned with National Educational Policy-2020 (NEP-2020). Activities under the MERITE scheme have been organized under three components namely- Improving quality and equity, improving research for better skills, entrepreneurship and innovation and Governance. These components are targeted to improve the standards of technical education, bring about academic reforms, establish well defined governance structure, promote research infrastructure, enhance employability skills and address the equity needs of the student population in the selected States and participating institutions. The interventions are bound to extend direct and indirect benefit across multiple entities. It has been further informed that the projected outlay of the scheme is Rs.4,200 Crore. World Bank is providing assistance in the form of loan by reimbursing 50% of the expenditure. The EFC (Expenditure Finance Committee) Note of MERITE has been prepared for appraisal and approval and the same is under circulation for inter-Ministerial consultation with the scheme expected to rollout in Academic Year 2023-24.

3.10.3 The Committee notes that the budgetary allocation 2023-24 under the Scheme for Transformational and Advanced Research in Sciences (STARS) and Scheme for Promotion of Academic and Research Collaboration (SPARC) are as under:

TABLE- 26

(Amount in Rs. Crores)

	Actuals 2020-21	Actuals 2021-22	BE 2022-23	RE 2022-23	Actuals as on 31.01.2023	BE 2023-24
Scheme for Transformational and Advanced Research in Sciences (STARS)	15	10.56	25	25	6	25

TABLE- 27

(Amount in Rs. Crores)

	Actuals 2020-21	Actuals 2021-22	BE 2022-23	RE 2022-23	Actuals as on 31.01.2023	BE 2023-24
Scheme for Promotion of Academic and Research Collaboration(SPARC)	0	0	74	70.59	0	50

3.10.4 In respect of the SPARC Scheme it has been informed that in the first phase total 392 Projects with a total budget of 25109.21 Lakhs have been approved by the Apex Committee headed by Secretary (HE). In the second phase of SPARC, 1222 proposals have been received and are currently under evaluation. The financial progress of the scheme is as given below:

TABLE- 28

(Amount in Rs. Crores)

Financial Year	Budget Estimate	Revised Estimate	Released Amount	Reasons for underutilization of funds
2018-19	NA	30.00	30.00	Not applicable.
2019-20	130.00	112.00	80.00	Not applicable.
2020-21	40.00	10.00	0	International mobility was affected due to COVID-19 Pandemic
2021-22	10.00	45.01	0	International mobility was affected due to COVID-19 Pandemic
2022-23	74.00	70.59	0	Financial year is still going on, hence not applicable.

3.10.5 The Committee is of the view that research and other policy efforts are primarily directed at improving research skills and MERITE programme also focuses on improving research skills and marketability in technical education. The Committee, therefore,

recommends that due care be taken while rolling out the scheme so that the access to technical education among students of socio-economically disadvantaged groups, and, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and all Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) improve for making of new India.

4. UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSION (UGC), ALL INDIA COUNCIL FOR TECHNICAL EDUCATION (AICTE) and other Autonomous Bodies (CUs/ IITs/ IITs etc.)

4.1   The Department has informed the Committee about the budget allocation to various autonomous bodies like Central Universities, IITs, Councils and other Higher learning Institutions which is as under:

TABLE - 29

(Amount in Rs. Crores)

S.No	Name of the Organisation/ Institution	Actuals 2020-21	Actuals 2021-22	BE 2022-23	RE 2022-23	Actuals as on 31.01.2023	BE 2023-24
	Statutory and Regulatory Bodies:						
1.	Support to University Grants Commission (UGC)	3,809.00	4,613.25	4,900.91	5,130.91	4,146.63	5360
2.	All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE)	385.00	416	420	420	309.3	420
	Autonomous Bodies:						
3.	Central Universities	8,373.65	8,879.11	9,520.66	11,091.15	8,579.91	11614
4.	Indian Institutes of Technology	6,680.58	8,081.62	8,495.00	9,345.00	8,046.99	9661.5
5.	Support to National Institutes of Technology (NITs) and IIEST	3,252.45	3,485.39	4,364.00	4,444.00	3,730.39	4820.6
6.	Support to Indian Institutes of Science for Education & Research (IISERs)	992.96	1032.05	1379.53	1,397.53	1170.13	1462
7.	Support to Indian Institute of Science (IISc)	603.98	615.98	727.25	829.25	678.82	815.4

8.	Indian Institutes of Information Technology (IIITs)	339.18	407.35	542.52	487.52	352.02	560
9.	Grants to Councils/Institutes for Excellence in Humanities and Social Sciences	168.88	198.26	311.68	288.33	132.51	400
10.	Grants to Institutes for Promotion of Indian Languages	378.62	176.5	250	250	159.55	300.7
11.	Support to Indian Institutes of Management	465.22	651	653.92	608.23	533.66	300
12.	IGNOU	110.50	103	105	105	84.09	105
	Other Autonomous Bodies	1163.74	1238.7	1429.53	1386.15	976.98	1515.93
	Total	**26,723.76**	**29,898.21**	**33,100.00**	**35,783.07**	**28,900.98**	**37335.7**

4.2   In respect of sanctioned, in-position and vacant post of Professors, Associate Professors and Assistant Professors in IITs/IIMs/IISERs, Central Universities and other higher educational institutions, the Department has informed that the Institute–wise vacancy position as on date is as under:

TABLE- 30

Group of Post	Posts			In Position Category					
	Sanctioned	Filled	Vacant	SC	ST	OBC	PwD	EWS	Gen
CUs	18956	12776	6180	1376	598	1892	212	229	8469
IITs	11292	6712	4415	279	64	650	36	12	5677
IIITs	1315	599	705	55	7	121		9	407
NITs	7483	5277	2206	593	156	929	33	22	3544
IIMs	1570	1086	484	43	6	88		6	943
IISERs	735	683	52	60	25	4	3		
Total	41351	27133	14042						

TABLE- 31

Group of Post	Number of Posts as on 31.12.2022			Category					
	Sanctioned	Filled	Vacant	Women	Third Gender	SC	ST	OBC	PwD
Group A	111	99	12	30	0	21	6	11	0
Group B	340	264	76	76	0	52	8	62	6
Group C	227	126	101	23	0	39	18	20	2
Total	678	489	189	129	0	112	32	93	8

4.3 In response to multiple queries on the issue of vacancies in various Institutions, Secretary, Department of Higher Education submitted that the Ministry is committed to fill existing vacancies against sanctioned posts in mission mode and has identified posts across all central educational institutions (both faculty and other support staff), which would be filled over the next one and a half year. The institutes are also working to fill existing vacancies as soon as possible. To complete the task, this Ministry had already initiated action for filling up of vacancies against Direct Recruitment quota as well as Promotion quota in all the Central Higher Educational Institutions from September, 2021. DoPT is monitoring the Mission Mode filling up of vacancies in Central Higher Educational Institutions (CHEIs) every month. A target is given every month to each CHEIs and monitoring is also being done against these targets. A portal has been also developed for centralized monitoring of real time filling up of vacancies in each and every institution. A link for the same is doptonline.nic.in/mr. As per the available record, the Ministry has filled up approximately 6500 posts from July 2022 till 24th February 2023. The Department has also shared the details of post filled up in the different Central Higher Educational Institutions and target to be filled up which is as follows:

TABLE - 32
Vacancy details in Central Higher Educational Institutions and details of Vacancy filled as per Target Dates

CATEGORY OF INSTITUTIONS	VACANCIES targeted to be filled up till July, 2023		Vacancies filled upto February 2023
	TEACHING POSTS	NON- TEACHING POSTS	
Central Universities	6059	9040	2568
IITs	4525	5248	1473

Language Institutions	14	44	6
IIITs	165	79	57
NITs	2261	4116	1705
IIMs	483	536	368
IISERs/IISc	119	452	170
NITTRs, BoATs& Standalone	320	482	51
SPAs	58	98	0
TOTAL	**14004**	**20095**	**6406**
Total Teaching & Non-Teaching Vacant positions	**34099**		
Remaining Targeted Vacancies to be filled up	**34099-6406 = 27693**		

T- teaching and NT -Non Teaching

4.4   In order to see a noticeable improvement, the Committee recommends the Department to take a proactive approach for monitoring the progress and actions being taken towards filling up of these vacancies in Universities, premier institutions under AICTE, IIMs, IITs, NITs etc., in a time bound manner with permanent faculties as far as possible by the end of 2023. The Committee further recommends that special recruitment campaigns should also be undertaken.

<u>**OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMITTEE AT A GLANCE**</u>

OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF THE DEMANDS FOR GRANTS (2023-24) OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Committee observes that in the FY 2022-23, the BE was Rs. 40828.35 Cr, which was kept same in RE 2022-23. BE for the next year 2023-24 has been kept at Rs.44094.62 Cr.

(Para: 2.5)

The Committee observes that the overall enhancement in allocation for autonomous bodies(UGC, AICTE, CUs, IITs, NITs, IIITS, IISc etc) is Rs. 4235.74 crores, which is an increase of 12.8 % over their allocation against BE 2022-23. Also, in BE 2023-24 Grant to UGC has been increased by 9.37% i.e. an increase of 459 crores. Further, Grant to Central universities have been increased by 17.66 %, Deemed University by 27%, support to IITs increased by 14%, and to NITs by 10.5% as compared to BE 2022-23. Moreover, IISC, Bangalore's Grant has been increased by 15%. In BE 2023-24, an amount of Rs. 400 crores has been provided for Prime Minister Research Fellowship (PMRF) as compared to Rs. 200 crores in BE 2022-23 i.e. 100% increase. The Committee appreciates the enhanced allocation over the BE 2022-23 under said Heads.   **(Para: 2.8)**

Further, the Committee takes note of the figures and facts furnished by the Department of Higher Education (at Table- 2 and 4) in respect of the percentage variations between BE 2022-23, RE 2022-23 and BE 2023-24. The Committee notices that broadly there is almost an increase of 8% in BE 2023-24 over RE 2022-23. There is also an increase of around 4.7 % in the allocation to Central Universities, which will receive an estimated Rs. 11,614 crores as against RE 2022-23 of Rs. 11,091.15 crores. There is an increase of 3.3 % for the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), for which the allocation is Rs. 9,661.5 crores. Finally, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (UGC and AICTE) under the Department receive an allocation of Rs. 5,780 crore which corresponds to an increase of 4.1% over RE 2022-23. The Committee notes that as the country's economy continues to grow and evolve, allocations under the Union Budget 2023 in sectors like Higher Education, which are set to be a game changer in India's development, should be sufficient to enthuse the said sector to   provide new and exciting opportunities for those pursuing higher education. The Committee desires that while seeking financial allocations, the Department should focus on the aspirational growth which the Higher Education sector should direct to translate the vision outlined in NEP 2020 into reality. The Committee remains hopeful that using the present allocations, the

Department will be able to push various initiatives which will increase access to educational opportunities for all students in higher education, provide enhanced financial aid and additional funding for research and development, which would surely result in more innovations and breakthroughs in the years to come. The Committee, therefore, recommends that proper physical and financial surveys of each of the schemes *vis-a vis* its targets should be carried out in a periodic manner to not only avoid time and cost overrun but also for their effective monitoring and implementation.

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(Para: 2.9)

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The Committee also takes note of the details of expenditure incurred as on 31st January, 2023 as given at Table- 5. The Committee finds that against the BE 2022-23 and RE 2022-23, the Department has been able to utilize Rs. 32,280.80 crores which is 79.06% of the funds allocated.

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(Para: 2.10)

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The Committee while noting the steps taken, is of the view that the pertinent issue of delayed submission of UCs by grantees/ Institutions needs to be addressed by putting in place a mechanism that makes it possible to fix accountability of the officers concerned. The Committee recommends that the reasons given by grantees/ institutions in response to delay in submission also need to be properly scrutinized and verified. The Committee also recommends that the Department should take proactive steps for highlighting the status of each grantee/institution and pendency of UCs against it on a public platform or through regular reminders to ensure that this requirement gets fulfilled and to check any laxity on their part.

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(Para: 2.12)

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The Committee is of the view that while handling the various Audit Paras and responding/resolving them, the Department should also derive necessary learning from them and accordingly, should issue protocol to be followed in such cases.

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(Para : 2.13)

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The Committee observes that it would be an instructive exercise for the Department to enlist the present progress *vis-a–vis* the identified thrust areas and that such a comparative status report be prepared and submitted to the Committee for its assessment/perusal.

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(Para: 2.14)

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The purpose of each such evaluation is not only to get an independent view about the scheme but also a critical analysis of its impact and how far the scheme has been able to address its defined goals, the Committee recommends that a Report-wise and its recommendation-wise analysis *vis-a-vis* action taken on the pointed issue be undertaken so that necessary course correction, if needed, can be initiated. **(Para: 2.16)**

SCHEMES/PROGRAMMES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION
CENTRALLY-SPONSORED SCHEME: RASHTRIYA UCHCHATAR SHIKSHA ABHIYAN (RUSA)

The Committee appreciates the enhanced allocations under RUSA in BE 2023-24 which has witnessed increase of around 300%. **(Para: 3.3.11)**

The Committee observes that funds are lying unutilized with the States/UTs due to revised instructions by Ministry of Finance for Centrally Sponsored Schemes regarding the Single Nodal Account (SNA) and the slow pace of compliance to these instructions by the States/UTs. In view of the above facts, the Committee recommends the Department to ensure better coordination with States/UTs and monitor the unutilized funds for improved utilization under RUSA 3.0 to curtail unspent amounts lying with States/UTs. **(Para: 3.3.12)**

The Committee appreciates the Department for improved approvals against targets set under various components under RUSA 2.0. However, the Committee also observes that there are reductions in targets for approvals under various components under RUSA 2.0 in comparison to RUSA 1.0 and recommends for increased targets and their approvals under various components for greater utilization of enhanced funds allocated under BE 2023-24.

(Para: 3.3.13)

The Committee notes that the RUSA has been extended till 2026, mainly to encourage the Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs)/ universities under the State Governments to improve their overall educational standards. The Committee appreciates that RUSA has been instrumental in improving the educational ecosystem under the State institutions where the funding to States is on the basis of critical appraisal of State Higher Education. It is also noted that RUSA describes each State's strategy to address issues of equity, access, and excellence in higher education. The Committee hopes that the extension of RUSA scheme will help to increase facilities like infrastructure, maintenance of labs and purchasing of high-

quality lab equipment ensuring that quality teaching-learning outcomes take place in the State government HEIs. The Committee, therefore, recommends that the focus of the scheme should shift to Tier II and Tier III cities to also bring the requisite benefits from the scheme to these cities which have great potential.   **(Para: 3.3.14)**

The Committee further recommends that the Department in co-ordination with the State Governments and Institutions should prepare a monitoring framework for effective implementation of the scheme. The Committee also recommends that the Department should ensure that a periodic stock is taken of the progress made and the improvements that are needed in the scheme. The Committee further recommends that initiatives in consultation with various stakeholders, Vice Chancellors and esteemed academicians that can lead to enhanced learning, better research, and promoting innovation be pushed under the scheme to bring about transformative reforms in the Higher Education System of States through creation of an institutional structure for planning and monitoring at the State level, promoting autonomy in State universities, and improving governance in institutions

(Para: 3.3.15)

The Committee notes and appreciates that the number of Indian HEIs, over the years have been steadily increasing and at present there are 41 Indian institutions which are finding place in these ranking. The Committee is hopeful that the sustained steps for improving the higher education ecosystem that are being taken by the Department / UGC will lead to inclusion of more Indian institutions in these global rankings. The Committee suggests that to attract international students the Department through UGC should issue guidelines for higher education institutions pertaining to introduction of courses on Indian heritage and culture such as Vedic mathematics, Yoga and Ayurveda which will result into increase in the enrolment for foreign and domestic students keen to unravel and unfurl the reservoir of hidden knowledge in these ancient paradigm of learning that may eventually lead to improvement of world rankings of our institutions as well.   **(Para: 3.3.17)**

CENTRAL SECTOR SCHEMES

INSTITUTES OF EMINENCE (IOE)/ WORLD CLASS INSTITUTIONS

The Committee observes and appreciates the impressive utilization under IoE which is 75% of RE 2022-23 during first three quarters of the current fiscal year. The Committee also

appreciates the enhanced allocation for IoE, which is Rs. 1500 crs. (BE 2023-24) as compared to Revised Estimates (2022-23) of Rs. 1200 crs.   (Para: 3.4.6)

The Committee notes that World-class universities play key roles in creating and disseminating knowledge, educating a highly skilled workforce for technological and intellectual leadership, and serving the needs of society and thus the scheme serves the purpose of support and recognition towards such efforts. The Committee appreciates the extension of the scheme and recommends that it can be reassessed by the Department/UGC, so that, it is suitably realigned with the visions of NEP 2020 and modifications required, if any, be addressed.   (Para: 3.4.7)

The Committee also recommends that while considering the institutions for the recognition as an IoE, factors like internationalization, eminent faculty inter disciplinary nature, multi-disciplinary research character, innovation ecosystem, transformational research outputs, etc., be also taken into account as these criteria will be helpful in placing these institutions on the international fora.   (Para: 3.4.8)

The Committee also recommends the Department to consider seeking additional allocations under the scheme at the RE stage in case a view emerges that more Institutions can be considered for recognition as IoEs which will lead these institutions to emerge as World Class Institutions that can help in quest for India emerging as a global academic hub.

(Para: 3.4.9)

The Committee notes that efforts at various levels are underway to grant IoE status to remaining two public institutions and five private institutions while one institution has expressed its inability to comply with the conditions of the letter of intent. The Committee, therefore, recommends that the process for granting status of IoEs be accelerated, so that, the remaining institutions also get the IoE status at the earliest. The Committee also directs that a status note on each of the two public institutions, five private institutions which are being considered for IoE status be placed before the Committee for its perusal.

(Para: 3.4.10)

HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCING AGENCY (HEFA)

The Committee notes that as on 31st December, 2022, projects worth Rs. 46700.03 crore have been approved by HEFA for which a loan amount of Rs. 35,253.18 crore has been

sanctioned and Rs. 16013.79 crore has actually been disbursed. The Committee agrees with the contention of the Department that outbreak of Covid-19 has dampened the demand, as the construction activities were closed and educational institutions were not in position to undertake new projects which resulted in approval of loans worth Rs. 35,253.18 crore, so far, falling short of the Government's target. The Committee, therefore, recommends that the Department should undertake sincere efforts to sanction more loans to mobilize the resources at the fullest, ensure speedy disbursal of sanctioned loans and to achieve targets in a time-bound manner during 2023-24. The Committee further recommends to expedite the revision of the HEFA scheme and notify it at the earliest to widen the scope for financing under HEFA.   (Para: 3.5.13)

NATIONAL APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING SCHEME

The Committee observes that currently, two apprenticeship schemes are in implementation, namely, National Apprenticeship Training Scheme (NATS) by the Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education (MoE) and National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (NAPS) by the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE). NATS implements apprenticeship training for engineering graduates, diploma holders and general stream graduates; while NAPS is meant for the rest of the categories of apprentices. The Committee notes that though there may be a demarcation in target group of beneficiaries, however, both schemes seem to be aimed towards a similar objective. Noting that the convergence of both the schemes will be beneficial, the Committee recommends that a joint analytical evaluation study be undertaken by the Department in coordination with MSDE of both the schemes, their objectives and the level to which they would get fulfilled if a single scheme was implemented as that will be in consonance with the thrust on integration of education and skill development which the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 envisages

(Para: 3.6.3)

STUDENT FINANCIAL AID

The Committee notes the submissions of the Department and recommends that a study of the various scholarship schemes given for higher education, along with the categories of beneficiaries, state-wise, SC/ST, gender-wise etc across the various Ministries of Government of India be carried out to evaluate the amounts and other benefits under each scheme. This will help in coherent formulation of policies and identification of groups to whom targeted

scholarships can be planned in a better way in future bringing the scholarships offered by other Ministries at par at least. (Para: 3.7.6)

The Committee recommends to increase the amount under various scholarship programmes taking into account the real expenses borne by students in view of the fact that most beneficiaries of the Scheme are primarily students from low-income and socially disadvantaged groups.

(Para: 3.7.7)

The Committee observes and appreciates the Department for enhanced allocations under PM Research Fellowship Scheme in BE 2023-24 to Rs. 400 crores from allocation of Rs. 200 crores which was enhanced to Rs. 300 crores in RE 2022-23. The Committee, recommends that the Department should closely look at the modalities of the Scheme, so that, the Research Ecosystem (ANUSANDHAN) as a whole gets fillip and brain drain of highly talented students could be stopped and the national priorities get aligned in chosen thrust-based and futuristic areas of research. (Para: 3.7.10)

DIGITAL INDIA e-LEARNING

The Committee appreciates the enhancement in allocation under Digital India e-Learning that has increased in BE 2023-24 as compared to RE 2022-23.

(Para: 3.8.2)

The Committee strongly feels that there is a pressing need to ensure that digital education penetrates even further and recommends that the Department should evaluate the schemes under the "Digital India e-Learning " category to bring them in tune with the objectives which call for developing high-quality electronic content in all local languages to cater to the diversity in the country, build suitable infrastructure for virtual training and laboratories along with high-end skill development courses, create guidelines for online/digital education to tackle the digital divide and to make use of technology for integrating the Indian education system. (Para: 3.8.3)

The Committee appreciates the measures being taken by the Department to improve digital education in India which will also enable increased digital accessibility among students in rural areas particularly remote villages with access to high-quality education. Also, it has been noted that India's growing embrace of digital education is luring major international ed-

tech platforms to provide students with online courses and expand their access to educational options. The Committee therefore, recommends that the Department should focus on identifying the remotest areas which are still left from digital accessibility and to equip students with contemporary and up to date e-learning platforms for preparation of workforce well equipped with industry-based skills and better employability.

(Para: 3.8.4)

The Committee further recommends for development of new cooperative mechanisms between the higher educational institutions/ universities with industry to find ways to support and strengthen digital education initiatives in the country to create a system for income generation for students in order to make them self-sufficient.   (Para: 3.8.5)

The Committee observes that Academic Bank of Credit (ABC), as envisaged in the National Educational Policy (NEP) 2020 is a national-level facility to promote flexibility of curriculum framework and inter-disciplinary/multi-disciplinary academic mobility of students across the higher education institutions in the country with appropriate "Credit Transfer" mechanism. The Committee recommends that the Department should lay great emphasis on popularising the novel concept.

(Para: 3.8.8)

The Committee takes note of the information furnished by the Department regarding the Budget allocations 2023-24 for Higher Education. The Department has also furnished details of a number of new initiatives planned by it, which are as under:

- Three Centres of Excellence will be set up in educational institutions to "Make AI in India and Make AI work for India". This is drawing from the fact that NEP 2020 recognizes the role of AI in all sectors of the economy which will require new skill set of the work force and AI has important role to play in the Agriculture, Health, Automobiles, Cyber Security, Smart Home/City Infrastructure, Data Analysis, Speech Recognition, Customer Service, Automated Stock Trading, Online shopping, Machine Translation, Digital Personal Assistance.

- Centers of excellence (CoEs) will implement the NEP 2020 vision of multidisciplinary research in agriculture, health and sustainable cities. It will also help premier educational institutions to transform research (ANUSANDHAN) to cutting edge technology needed essentially for a country of our size and diversity.

- National Data Governance Policy - unleashes innovation and research by start-ups

and academia, a National Data Governance Policy will be brought out. This will help drive 'Anusandhan' across HEIs.

- **100 labs for developing apps using 5G services will be set up in HEIs, to realize new opportunities, business models and employment potential. Labs will cover among others, apps like Smart Classrooms, Precision Farming, Intelligent Transports Systems and Healthcare. These will provide a fillip to employment, start-ups, businesses and promote innovation & entrepreneurship in our young engineers. Also, attempts to transform engineering education by introducing courses in emerging sector and make the approach multidisciplinary, not only in IITs, NITs and IISERs etc. but in engineering institutions across the country are underway.**

(Para: 3.9.19)

The Committee appreciates the initiatives and recognizing the importance of higher education and its role in advancement of the NEP 2020 vision, understands that much greater influx of funds would be required to translate the proposed initiatives into reality. The Committee, therefore, recommends that the Department should undertake a thorough analysis of its funding requirements, category- wise, scheme-wise and NEP 2020 clause-wise along with the cumulative funding that can be generated through the States and private sector, so that, it can be taken note of and factored towards policy formulation and allocations in future.

(Para: 3.9.20)

The Committee is of the view that research and other policy efforts are primarily directed at improving research skills and MERITE programme also focuses on improving research skills and marketability in technical education. The Committee, therefore, recommends that due care be taken while rolling out the scheme so that the access to technical education among students of socio-economically disadvantaged groups, and, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and all Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) improve for making of new India. (Para: 3.10.5)

UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSION (UGC), ALL INDIA COUNCIL FOR TECHNICAL EDUCATION (AICTE) and other Autonomous Bodies (CUs/ IITs/ IITs etc.)

In order to see a noticeable improvement, the Committee recommends the Department to take a proactive approach for monitoring the progress and actions being taken towards filling up of these vacancies in Universities, premier institutions under AICTE, IIMs, IITs, NITs etc., in a time bound manner with permanent faculties as far as possible by the end of 2023. The Committee further recommends that special recruitment campaigns should also be undertaken. **(Para: 4.4)**