

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2483
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DECLINING TREND IN APTITUDE FOR SCIENCE
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Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

:

- (a) Whether a declining trend has been noticed in aptitude for science due to rapid development in the fields such as IT ;
- (b) If so, whether the Government proposes to chalk out any scheme to promote the sciences; and
- (c) If so, the details in this regard ?

Answer

MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF EARTH SCIENCES(KAPIL SIBAL)

(a) It has been noticed in recent times that meritorious students prefer disciplines other than sciences for their studies, like IT-related engineering areas, commerce, business economics, etc., because of better career options available to them in these sectors of economy. The flight away from study of pure sciences starts quite early, right from the 10+2 stage. The India Science Report, prepared by the National Council of Applied Economic Research for the Indian National Science Academy, reveals that 22% of the students at the Class VI-VIII level want to study pure science at higher levels of education. But when it comes to students in Class XI and XII, only 13.4% want to study pure science at the graduate and post-graduate level.

(b)&(c) : The Government has already instituted several schemes to attract meritorious students and scientists to a career in science—from the attractive Kishore Vaigyanik Protsahan Yojana scholarships at the School and College level to the Shyama Prasad Mookerjee fellowships, Swarnajayanti fellowships, young scientist projects and awards, JC Bose and Ramanujan fellowships at the research level. These are supplemented by relatively liberal research grants available today to active researchers. Through the Fund for Improvement of Science and Technology (FIST) programme and by establishing research facilities and centers of excellence, the Government has also tried to make available competitive research infrastructure to our basic science researchers. More recently, three new Indian Institutes of Science Education and Research (IISERs) have been set up at Kolkata, Pune and Chandigarh, which, apart from carrying out frontline and internationally competitive research, would offer integrated M.Sc. programmes in a multi-disciplinary and academically flexible and research-oriented environment.

The Government, in the XI Plan, is also proposing to launch a new scheme called INSPIRE (Innovation in Science Pursuit for Inspired Research). The main features of the proposed scheme will be:

- (1) innovation funding in schools (one million young innovators);
- (2) summer camp with science icons (for high performers) ;
- (3) assured opportunity schemes for proven talent force; and,
- (4) retention of talent in public funded research through public-private partnerships.