Ministry of Science & Technology

PARLIAMENT QUESTION: RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT AND INNOVATION SCHEME

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On July 1, the Union Cabinet approved a Research, Development and Innovation (RDI) Scheme.

The scheme has a total outlay of ₹1 lakh crore over 6 years, with ₹20,000 crore allocated for FY 2025–26. Technology sectors of strategic importance have been identified under the RDI Scheme. These include energy security, climate action, and deep technologies such as quantum computing, artificial intelligence, biotechnology, and the digital economy. The scheme also covers sectors critical for strategic and economic security, with the flexibility to include additional sectors based on approval from the Empowered Group of Secretaries (EGoS). The nature of financing under this scheme includes long-term loans (at low or no interest), equity financing, and contributions to the Deep-Tech Fund of Funds. Grant financing and short-term loans are not envisaged under the scheme.

A Special Purpose Fund (SPF) under the Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF) will serve as the Level 1 Fund Custodian. Implementation will be carried out by Second-Level Fund Managers (SLFMs), including Alternate Investment Funds (AIFs), Development Finance Institutions (DFIs), Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs), and Focused Research Organizations (FROs), such as BIRAC, TDB, and IIT Research Parks, with approval from the Empowered Group of Secretaries (EGoS).

The Department of Science & Technology (DST) is the nodal agency for the scheme. Oversight and governance are provided by the Governing Board of ANRF, while the EGoS, Executive Council (EC), and Investment Committees (ICs) are responsible for sector approvals, fund manager selection, project evaluation, and overall performance review.

Funding under the scheme is intended only for projects that have achieved a certain level of technological maturity — specifically, Technology Readiness Level (TRL) 4 and above, and allow for the acquisition of strategically important technologies. However, the financing excludes next-generation R&D labs, RDI financing for government entities, and short-term loans. Financing will be limited to a maximum of 50% of the project's assessed cost, with the remaining funds arranged by the project proponent. In exceptional types of projects/sectors, the financial limit for government share in financing can be relaxed with the approval of the EGoS.

This information was given by Dr. Jitendra Singh, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science and Technology, Earth Sciences, MoS PMO, MoS Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions, Department of Atomic Energy and Department of Space, in a written reply in the Lok Sabha today.

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