



DHR-ICMR's SHINE 2026 brings school students face-to-face with health research across 83 locations

Around 30,000 students to experience health research first-hand

Two-day programme being held on 11–12 August across 83 ICMR locations

From Keylong to Kerala and Diu to Nagaland, SHINE 2026 takes science across India

Students to explore laboratories, witness live demonstrations and interact with ICMR scientists

Dr Rajiv Bahl encourages students to stay curious, ask questions and explore science as a career

SHINE website launched; nationwide student research competition announced

Initiative aims to nurture scientific temper and inspire the next generation of health researchers

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The second edition of ICMR-SHINE (Science and Health Innovation for NextGen Explorers) commenced today, as the Department of Health Research (DHR) and the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) welcomed school students into their laboratories for a nationwide open-day experience. Inspired by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's call for students to “spend one day as a scientist,” the two-day programme is being observed on 11–12 August 2026 across 83 locations nationwide, including ICMR institutes, Model Rural Health Research Units (MRHRUs), and affiliated field units. From Keylong in Himachal Pradesh, at an altitude of nearly 10,000 feet, to Kerala in the south, and from Diu in the west to Nagaland in the east, the program will reach children across the country, bringing them closer to science and encouraging curiosity and interest in scientific enquiry.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr Rajiv Bahl, Secretary, DHR & Director General, ICMR, said, “To all the young students joining us today, I encourage you to be curious, ask questions and never be afraid to wonder why. Every discovery begins with a question, and every innovation begins with the courage to explore a new possibility. I hope your experience at SHINE gives you a glimpse of the exciting world of health research and inspires you to consider science not only as something you study, but as a career through which you can make a meaningful difference to people’s lives.”

During his interaction with the participating students, Dr Rajiv Bahl engaged with their questions on science, health and research, responding through relatable examples and encouraging them to remain curious and think beyond textbooks. He also inaugurated the exhibition showcasing ICMR’s research work and innovations, giving students an opportunity to explore how scientific discoveries translate into solutions for real-world health challenges.

Over these two days, students of Grades 9 to 12 from government and private schools are stepping directly into the world of health research. Participating students are taking part in guided laboratory tours, research exhibitions, poster walks, video presentations, and live demonstrations of ongoing scientific work, and are interacting with ICMR scientists to gain insight into their research journeys, areas of expertise, and everyday work in public health.

Bringing the spirit of scientific curiosity to life for the young participants is Dr Curio, the official mascot of SHINE, who features across the initiative's outreach material, posters, and social media, and as the narrator of a series of interactive videos on ICMR's work.

To mark the occasion, ICMR also launched the official SHINE website (shine.icmr.org.in), a dedicated platform hosting resources, updates, and opportunities for students interested in health research. Alongside the launch, ICMR announced a nationwide school competition inviting students to frame their own research questions and propose potential solutions to real-world public health challenges. Around 30,000 students are expected to take part in this next phase of the initiative through invitations extended by ICMR laboratories across the country.

By opening the doors of its institutes and research units, the program seeks to make science tangible and accessible, showing young learners how research addresses the health challenges facing communities and encouraging them to see a future for themselves in scientific enquiry. Aligned with India's Viksit Bharat 2047 vision, the initiative reaffirms ICMR's commitment to nurturing scientific temper among the country's youth and to inspiring the next generation of researchers who will contribute to India's health and development goals.













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