

Prepare a plan to boost research in State varsities: PM to scientific advisory panel

OUR BUREAU

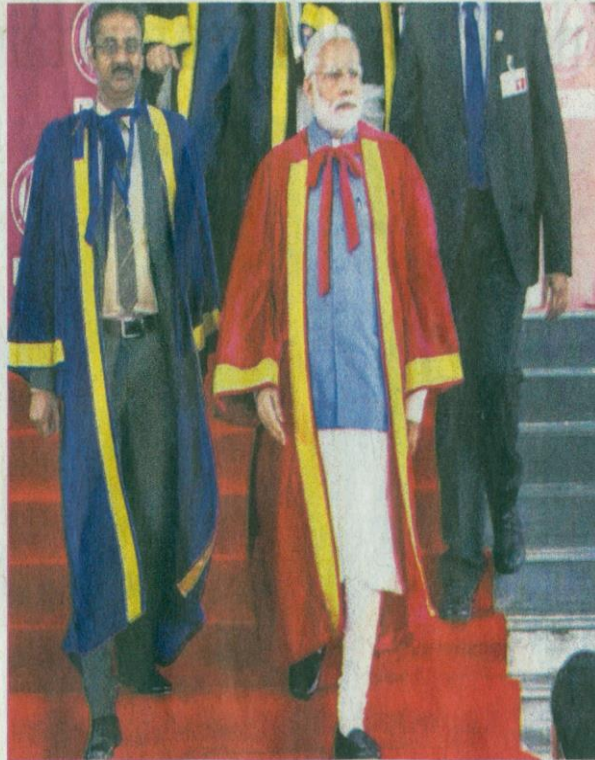
Phagwara (Punjab), January 3

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday asked his apex expert scientific advisory panel to prepare an action plan aimed at creating a strong research ecosystem in State universities and colleges in the country.

"Over 95 per cent Indian students study in State Universities and colleges, where research is still limited. A strong research ecosystem needs to be developed in these universities. I call upon the Prime Minister's Science, Technology and Innovation Council to discuss these issues in detail and formulate a plan in consultation with the Ministry of Human Resources Development to promote research in State universities," Modi said while inaugurating the 106th Indian Science Congress at the Lovely Professional University at Phagwara.

Promoting research and innovation is important if India has to emerge as one among three major economic powers in the world. While there are central universities and many research institutes such as the Indian Institute of Science, Tata Institute of Fundamental Research and Indian Institutes of Technology which are doing excellent research, this is not enough, he said.

The opening of the five-day scientific meet, considered to be one of largest congregation of scientists anywhere in the world, was also attended by other dignitaries including Punjab Governor V P Singh Badnore, Science and Technology Minister Harsh Vardhan, Minister of State for Social Justice Vijay Sampla. However, Punjab Chief Minister Capt. Amarinder Singh was conspicuous by his absence, even though Punjab Minister for Industries and Commerce Sun-



Prime Minister Narendra Modi arrives for the inauguration of the 106th Indian Science Congress, at Lovely Professional University in Jalandhar, on Thursday PTI

der Sham Arora, attended the inauguration, which was delayed by close to three hours as foggy weather

delayed the Prime Minister's flight.

Modi also added 'Jai Anusandhan' to former Prime

Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri's famous slogan of 'Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan' and Atal Bihari Vajpayee's 'Jai Vigyan'. Stressing upon the focal theme of the current science congress session, Future India: Science and Technology, the Prime Minister said there is a need to boost our discovery science ecosystem, by focusing more on innovation and start-ups.

Call to scientists

"Our scientists must commit themselves to addressing problems of affordable healthcare, housing, clean air, water and energy, agricultural productivity and food processing. While Science is universal, technology must be local for providing solutions relevant to local needs and conditions," the Prime Minister told a gathering of 20,000 delegates, scientists, research scholars and school and college students. The event was also attended by

scientists from 60 other countries, including three Nobel laureates.

Modi also called upon Indian scientists to work towards ease of living for people. There is a need for having better drought management in low rainfall areas, more efficient and accurate early warning systems for floods and cyclones and tackling diseases such as encephalitis, which afflict young children.

The PM said the government recently set up a ₹3,600-crore national mission on interdisciplinary cyber physical systems which would help young Indians to make use of opportunities provided by global rise in cyber physical systems. The mission, he said, would cover in a seamless way research and development, technology development, human resource development, start-up ecosystem and industry collaboration.