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I-STEM launches â??One District, Minimum One Equipmentâ?? to drive use of Rs 1500 Cr worth lab equipment

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I-STEM is working to ensure that every district in the country has access to Scientific Equipment to further Research & Development and drive innovation



I-STEM (Indian Science, Technology, and Engineering facilities Map), an initiative from the Office of Principal Scientific Adviser, Government of India, is launching ‘One District, One Equipment’ to ensure that every district in the country has access to scientific equipment.

According to I-STEM data, over Rs 1,500 crore worth of lab equipment in scientific and educational institutions across India, already listed on the I-STEM portal, remains unutilised due to various factors.

Institutions that actively optimise equipment availability not only accelerate research but also boost India’s Global Innovation Index ranking.

This revolutionary programme aims to connect researchers, startups, and industries with a vast network of labs and equipment across diverse sectors through an I-STEM-operated portal. It provides a platform for academic institutions to register their scientific equipment that can be rented by startups, industry, entrepreneurs and researchers.

This will save the researchers, industry and startups the prohibitive capital expenditure of purchasing advanced equipment. At the National level, this prevents the duplication of scarce resources in the research institutions.

According to data available with I-STEM, institutions across 167 out of 192 districts have been onboarded onto the I-STEM portal. However, many fail to respond to researchers seeking access to scientific equipment. Additionally, they face various challenges in supporting researchers, which hinders R&D progress, impacts India’s Global Innovation Index (GII) ranking, and slows down innovation in startups and industries.

India’s I-STEM portal was designed to democratise access to lab infrastructure. However, it faces systemic non-compliance issues as only 1.1% of 26,737 registered equipment is frequently used.

I-STEM portal has the potential to revolutionize lab infrastructure utilization but institutions must take proactive steps to unlock their full potential.