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## 'Rent-A-Lab' Policy to Bring Revenues to Institutions

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The government has proposed a new policy that could transform scientific instruments in government labs into lucrative assets generating a steady rental income.

### Key Highlights

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- The policy, called the Scientific Research Infrastructure Management and Networks (SRIMAN), intends to hire out to researchers all lab equipment that cost more than Rs 10 lakh. However, for now, the policy wouldn't apply to strategic sectors.
- The new system, according to the policy, envisages institutions declaring on a website how often their instruments would be available for use by those outside the department or university.
- The desired equipment would be available to researchers for a prescribed fee.

### Why the Need for Such Policy?

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- It is common to find in Indian laboratories, expensive equipment lying idle and these are plagued by issues such as maintenance and availability of spares.
- Several universities also cannot afford expensive equipment. At the same time, many of the equipment isn't used beyond 20%-30% of their lifetime. The larger plan is to develop "clusters" of instrumentation facilities.