



# 108th Indian Science Congress

## Why in News?

Recently, the **108<sup>th</sup> session of the India Science Congress (ISC) was inaugurated by the Prime Minister.**

- The event's theme is '**Science and Technology for Sustainable Development with Women's Empowerment**'.

## What are the Highlights of the PM Address?

- **Importance of Women's Participation:**
  - **Increasing participation of women** is a reflection of the progress of society and science.
  - Today, the **country's thinking is not only that women should be empowered through science**, but science should also be empowered with the participation of women.
  - Women's participation in **extramural research has doubled over the last eight years.**
  - India has been **given the opportunity to preside over G20.**
    - Women-led development is one of the high-priority subjects taken up by the chair.
- **India's Achievements:**
  - India is now **one of the top three countries in the world when it comes to the number of PhD research works** and startup ecosystems.
  - The country is now ranked **40<sup>th</sup> on the Global Innovation Index 2022**, up from the 81st rank in 2015.
  - Scientific developments should ultimately make the country Atmanirbhar.
- **Importance of Science in Today's World:**
  - The efforts of science can **bear fruit only when they go from labs to land.**
  - With 2023 being **declared as the International Year of Millets**, India's millets and their use should be further improved with the use of science.
  - The scientific community should work **towards reducing post-harvest losses with the help of biotechnology.**
- **Energy Innovation:**
  - Endorsed the **need for the scientific community to focus on working on a National Hydrogen Mission** and stressed the need to manufacture critical equipment like electrolyzers in India to make it a success.
    - The National Hydrogen Mission was launched on **India's 75<sup>th</sup> Independence Day (15<sup>th</sup> August 2021).**
- **Other Highlights:**
  - **Stressed on the increasing importance of data gathering and analysis** as well as the importance of traditional knowledge alongside modern knowledge.
  - **Acknowledged the role of low-cost satellite launch vehicles** in the booming space sector in India and pointed to the importance of [quantum computing](#).
  - **Stressed the need to focus on futuristic ideas and areas where no work is happening** anywhere as well as the importance of keeping [Artificial intelligence \(AI\)](#), [Augmented Reality \(AR\)](#) and **Virtual Reality (VR)** as priorities.

## What is the India Science Congress?

▪ **About:**

- With a history dating back to 1914, the **Science Congress is a one-of-its-kind event in the country.**
- It **brings together scientists and researchers not just from the premier institutions** and laboratories but also science teachers and professors from colleges and universities.
- It **offers a platform for their interaction with students** and the general public on matters related to science.
- It is a **celebration of Indian science that has had an illustrious past**, with the who's who of Indian science participating and organizing.
- The first session of the **Indian Science Congress was held in 1914.**

▪ **Organiser:**

- Indian Science Congress Association (ISCA).
  - It is an **independent body functioning with the support of the Department of Science and Technology (DST)** in the central government.

▪ **Decline of Science Congress:**

- In more recent times, the **event has attracted attention for all the wrong reasons:**
  - Lack of serious discussion, the promotion of pseudoscience, outlandish claims by random speakers, and the absence of useful outcomes.
- As a result, **several top scientists have advocated the discontinuation of the event**, or at least withdrawal of government support.
  - For organising the Science Congress, the government provides an annual grant.
  - Besides this, the government has no role to play in organising the ISC.

[Source:IE](#)

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