

2.24. Science & Technology

Given the objectives and challenges for achieving a broad based higher economic growth rate in agriculture, industry and services, that includes better health, clean drinking water, rural infrastructure, etc., it is important to take stock of the situation and develop strategies and plans to address them. For that purpose, there is an urgent need to focus on enlarging the pool of scientific manpower, strengthening the science and technology infrastructure and converting this potential into reality, pushing the state into the knowledge era, thereby helping to raise its economy to the level of developed nations. The effective use of technological advances is the key to successful and sustainable development.

Objectives

The objectives envisaged for the Annual Plan 2008-09 are to propagate and popularize science and technology to foster strong scientific temper among the people, develop Science and Technology manpower and foster promising research, particularly in new frontier cutting edge technology areas such as bio-technology, information technology and nano-technology, to promote application of science and technology in those areas of socio-economic and environmental development for better standard of living of people and cater to the needs of school students in science learning.

Strategy

The strategies to be adopted for implementation of Science & Technology schemes to achieve the above objectives are by Utilizing the existing excellent infrastructure, expertise and facilities available already in the state, promoting effective co-ordination among the centres of scientific and technological research, Government agencies, farms and industries, promoting the popularization of Science and Technology among the public by way of organizing Awareness Programmes, Training Programmes, Exhibitions, Seminars Lectures etc.

Programmes

There are three main major autonomous bodies functioning for the development of Science and Technology in the state. The Tamil Nadu State Council for Science and Technology, Science City and Tamil Nadu Science and Technology Centre have been undertaking various activities to promote science and technology at State level by initiating, supporting and coordinating fundamental and applied research programmes in universities, other scientific bodies and non-governmental organizations and creating awareness among public, students and researchers in the field of industry, agriculture, health, environment, energy and other sectors.

Tamil Nadu State Council for Science and Technology

The Tamil Nadu State Council for Science and Technology has been undertaking various activities to create scientific temper among the students and encourage research activities by implementing schemes such as Student Project Scheme, Adoption of Young Student Scientists Scheme, Young Scientists Fellowship Scheme, Partial financial assistance for the conduct of Seminar/ Symposia/ Workshop, Popularization of Science Activities, Assistance for S&T Publication, Travel Grant, Tamilnadu Scientist Award, Science & Technology Project and Creation of Scientific Awareness. It has spent a sum of Rs.65 lakh in 2007-08 and proposes an outlay of Rs.87 lakh to implement the above schemes in the Annual Plan 2008-09.

Tamil Nadu Science and Technology Centre

Tamil Nadu Science and Technology Centre has been popularizing Science and Technology among the common people in general and students in particular. Its activities include organizing science and technology based temporary exhibitions, conducting workshops, seminars, lectures, short-term courses in astronomy and astronomy camps and competitions like quiz, essay, elocution, drawing, maths talent search contest, etc. It is also proposed to

establish a 3D theatre with modernized and sophisticated system with digital sound system.

The B.M. Birla Planetarium will be strengthened with modern equipments for having very high quality of Audio Visual effects inside the Planetarium sky theatre. The centre will undertake modernization of various Galleries. Galleries on health and hygiene, Popular Science, and an Industry and Traffic Park at Anna Science Centre Planetarium, Trichy are proposed to be established.

An outlay of Rs.1.88 crore is proposed to implement the various programmes during 2008-09.

Science City

It is implementing various programs connected to the development of Science and Technology such as setting up of Information System, networking of libraries within Science City, popularisation of science, creating awareness about the latest developments in science and technology among Science City scientists and students by organizing awareness programmes, creating a database of scientists, research scholars and research facilities in the Science City area etc. The Science Festivals are being organised with the aim of enhancing the popularity of science. It is designed to increase public awareness of science and present scientific results in a popular and appealing way through scientific exhibits by schools, colleges and renowned organisation, demonstrations by faculty, scientific, film shows interactive sessions, competitions etc. A sum of Rs.0.70 crore has been spent during 2007-08. A sum of Rs.0.99 crore is proposed for Science City during the Annual Plan 2008-09.

Plan Outlay for 2008-09

An Outlay of Rs.25.80 crore has been approved for the Science and Technology sector for the Eleventh Plan. An outlay of Rs.3.75 crore is approved during the Annual Plan 2008-09.