

RASHTRAPATI BHAVAN

A reflection of his enduring interest in higher education, the President has so far held four meets with the heads of central universities and institutions of higher learning. On 6th January this year, he met with the Vice Chancellors of 17 new central universities. On 6th March, he met with the Directors of IITs, IISERs and IISC. And on 02 May, he met with the VCs of 41 Central Universities. And today, 13th July, he met with the heads of nineteen central institutions of higher learning. His engagement with the academic community continues, with a meeting with the Directors of NITs, IIITs and SPAs scheduled on the 19th of July. With these meets, the President would have, in his first year, met the heads of all the 146 universities and institutes of which he is the Visitor.

Apart from his regular meets with the heads of central universities and institutes, the President during this year, has also hosted in Rashtrapati Bhavan various programs and events to encourage research and innovation. On 2nd February, the Rashtrapati Bhavan national session of the Nobel Prize series, India 2018 was organized with the theme 'Science impacts lives' in collaboration with the Department of biotechnology. Between 19-23rd March, a week long Festival of Innovation and entrepreneurship was hosted in Rashtrapati Bhavan which included over 150 innovation exhibits, workshops and roundtable discussions on innovation and entrepreneurship and a in-residence program for innovation scholars. On 2nd May, the Visitor's Awards function was held at Rashtrapati Bhavan, where the President gave away awards in three categories for best research (in sciences and social sciences) and best technology development, in central universities.

Today's meet with the nineteen institutes was unique as these institutes were falling under the administrative domain of nine different ministries of the Government and represented critical areas such as agriculture; pharmaceuticals; aviation; design; footwear design; fashion; petroleum and energy; maritime studies; and youth development.

During the meet, presentations were made by the heads of all the institutions explaining the challenges and vision of each of the institutions. The concerned administrative secretaries also provided their comments on their respective institutes. Among the issues discussed were the problems of vacancies in these institutions, locational disadvantages due to remote campuses, problems in retaining faculty, infrastructural inadequacies etc.

