

THE CENTRAL SANSKRIT UNIVERSITIES BILL, 2019

Relevant for: Developmental Issues | Topic: Education and related issues

- The Central Sanskrit Universities Bill, 2019 was introduced in Lok Sabha by the Minister of Human Resource Development, Mr. Ramesh Pokhriyal, on December 11, 2019. Presently, there are three deemed-to-be Sanskrit universities: (i) Rashtriya Sanskrit Sansthan, New Delhi, (ii) Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri Rashtriya Sanskrit Vidyapeeth, New Delhi, and (iii) Rashtriya Sanskrit Vidyapeeth, Tirupati. The Bill seeks to convert these into Central Sanskrit Universities.
- **Establishment of the Universities:** The Bill seeks to convert the three deemed-to-be universities into Central Universities. The Universities will: (i) disseminate and advance knowledge for the promotion of Sanskrit, (ii) make special provisions for integrated courses in humanities, social sciences, and science, and (iii) train manpower for the overall development and preservation of Sanskrit and allied subjects.
- **Functions of the University:** Key powers and functions of the University include: (i) prescribing courses of study and conducting training programmes, (ii) granting degrees, diplomas, and certificates, (iii) providing facilities through a distance education system, (iv) conferring autonomous status on a college or an institution, and (v) provide instructions for education in Sanskrit and allied subjects.
- **Authorities:** Each University will have the following authorities: (i) a Court, which will review the policies of the University and suggest measures for its development, (ii) an Executive Council, which will be the principal executive body, (iii) an Academic and Activity Council, which will supervise academic policies, (iv) a Board of Studies, which will approve the subjects for research and recommend measures to improve standards of teaching, (v) a Finance Committee, which will examine proposals related to creation of posts and recommend limits on the expenditure of the University, and (vi) a Planning and Monitoring Board, which will be responsible for the overall planning and development of the University. The Executive Council may declare additional authorities through the statutes.
- **Executive Council:** The Executive Council will be responsible for all the administrative affairs of the University. The Council will consist of 15 members. These include: (i) the Vice-Chancellor (appointed by the Centre), (ii) the Joint Secretary, Ministry of Human Resource Development, and (iii) two eminent academics from the field of Sanskrit or allied subjects. The Vice-Chancellor shall be the chairperson of the Council.
- Key functions of the Council include: (i) creating teaching and academic posts and their appointment, (ii) managing the revenue and property of the University, (iii) managing and regulating the finances of the University, and (iv) partnering with industry and non-government agencies to advance knowledge.

- **Visitor of the university:** The President of India will be the Visitor of the University. He may appoint persons to review and inspect the functioning of the University. The Executive Council may take action based on the findings of the inspection. If no action is taken within a reasonable time period, the Visitor may issue binding directions to the Council. In addition, the Visitor may annul any proceeding of the University which do not conform with the Bill.
- **Statutes:** The Schedule to the Bill contains statutes. These statutes specify the establishment, composition, and powers of various authorities such as the Chancellor, Vice Chancellor, and Dean of Schools. The Executive Council may add, amend or repeal statutes. Any such action will require the approval of the Visitor.

Dispute and appeals: Any student or candidate whose name has been removed from the rolls of the University and who has been barred from appearing for examinations may appeal to the Executive Council for review of the decision. Any dispute arising out of the disciplinary action taken by the University against a student may be referred to a Tribunal of Arbitration at the request of the student. Disputes arising out of the contract between an employee and the University may also be referred to the Tribunal. The Tribunal will consist of: (i) one member appointed by the Executive Council, (ii) one member nominated by the employee or student concerned, and (iii) an umpire appointed by the Visitor.

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