Bill Summary

The Indian Statistical Institute Bill, 2026

- The Indian Statistical Institute Bill, 2026 was introduced in Lok Sabha on August 3, 2026. It provides a legal framework for the Indian Statistical Institute, Kolkata (ISI). ISI provides education, research, and training in statistics. The Bill seeks to repeal and replace the Indian Statistical Institute Act, 1959.
- **Incorporation:** ISI is presently registered as a society under the West Bengal Societies Registration Act, 1961. The Bill provides that ISI will be a body corporate, and will be a not-for-profit legal entity.
- **Objects**: The Bill provides that the objectives of ISI will include: (i) advancing and disseminating knowledge of statistical sciences and allied fields, (ii) fostering interdisciplinary research in statistical sciences, mathematics, economics, computer science and other fields, (iii) enhancing collaboration amongst industry, academia and government to promote practical application of knowledge, and (iv) becoming a centre of global excellence in statistical sciences and allied fields. ISI may establish new centres with prior approval of the central government.
- **Visitor**: The Bill specifies the governance structure of ISI. The President of India will be the Visitor. The Visitor may appoint one or more persons to: (i) review the work and progress, and (ii) hold inquiries into its affairs. The Visitor may take actions and issue directions based on the inquiry or review reports, which will be binding. Under the Act, the central government has powers to form Committees for such reviews and inquiries.
- **Board of Governors**: ISI will have a Board of Governors as the principal policy making executive body. The Chairperson of the Board will be a distinguished person in academia, industry, education, public policy, statistical sciences and allied sciences, or other such fields. The Chairperson will be nominated by the Visitor on the recommendation of the central government. Other members of the Board include: (i) a nominee from the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI), not below the rank of Joint Secretary, (ii) Joint/Additional Secretary and Financial Adviser of MoSPI, (iii) four eminent persons in the field of statistical sciences and allied fields, nominated by the Chairperson, and (iv) four specified representatives of ISI. Functions of the Board include: (i) deciding questions of policy relating to administration and working of the Institute, (ii) approving budget and development plans, (iii) establishing departments and facilities, (iv) setting up centres of studies under intimation to the central government, (v) granting degrees and other academic distinctions, (vi) creating posts with the prior approval of the central government, (vii) framing regulations, and (viii) undertaking periodic performance review (through an independent agency or a group of experts).
- **Councils:** The Bill establishes: (i) an academic council as the principal academic body to decide matters such as courses, admissions, examination, and evaluation, (ii) a finance committee to scrutinise accounts and expenditure, and (iii) a management council for each centre for general superintendence and control of affairs of the centre.
- **Director:** The Board will appoint a Director who will be the chief executive officer, with prior approval of the Visitor. The Director will be responsible for: (i) implementing the decisions of the Board and the academic council, and (ii) day-to-day administration. The Board may remove the Director from office, with prior approval of the Visitor.
- **Powers of the central government:** The Act empowers the central government to issue directions in public interest, with reasons to be recorded in writing. The Bill instead empowers the central government to issue directions if necessary for efficient administration of the Act.
- Under the Act, the central government may take charge of ISI for up to two years in case of: (i) default in giving effect to its directions, or (ii) exceeding or abuse of powers by the institute management. The Bill removes these powers.
- The Act requires prior approval of the central government for amending rules and regulations. Under the Bill, prior approval will be required only for the first regulations made by the Board.

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