

108th Indian Science Congress

January 6, 2023

In news– The Prime Minister has recently addressed the 108th Indian Science Congress (ISC) via video conferencing.

About 108th ISC-

- The largest gathering of scientists and students in the country, the Science Congress is an annual five-day event from January 3 to 7, a permanent fixture on the Prime Minister's calendar, and usually his/her first public engagement in the new year.
- **The focal theme of 108th ISC is "Science and Technology for Sustainable Development with Women Empowerment".**
- The 108th annual session of ISC was held at Rashtrasant Tukadoji Maharaj Nagpur University, which is also celebrating its centenary this year.
- **With a history dating back to 1914, the Science Congress is a one-of-its-kind event in the country, bringing together scientists and researchers** not just from the premier institutions and laboratories but also science teachers and professors from colleges and universities, and offering a platform for their interaction with students and the general public on matters related to science.
- **The event is organized by the Indian Science Congress Association (ISCA), an independent body functioning with the support of the Department of Science and Technology (DST) in the central government.**
- The salaries of the permanent staff of ISCA are paid by the DST.
- **For organising the Science Congress, the government provides an annual grant**, which has been increased to Rs 5 crore from this year – it used to be Rs 3 crore earlier.
- **Several other government agencies, like the Science and**

Education Research Board, also make financial contributions because the event is seen as an effort to promote science.

- Additional resources are raised through sponsorship and fees for renting out exhibition spaces.
- **The government has no role to play in the selection of the panelists or speakers, the papers to be presented, or the subjects to be discussed.**
- But because of the support it provides, and also due to the presence of the Prime Minister, other ministers, and officials, the event gets closely associated with the government.

Several other programmes were also organised alongside ISC-

- **Children's Science Congress** is organised to help stimulate scientific interest and temperament among children.
- **Farmer's Science Congress** is organised to provide a platform to improve the bio-economy and attract youth to agriculture.
- **Tribal Science Congress** is also organised which is a platform for the scientific display of indigenous ancient knowledge systems and practices, along with focusing on the empowerment of tribal women.