

Parliament Passes Bill To Declare Two Food Technology Institutes As Institutions Of National Importance

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The Lok Sabha today passed the National Institutes of Food Technology, Entrepreneurship and Management Bill, 2021, to declare certain institutes of food technology, entrepreneurship, and management as institutions of national importance.

These institutes are:

the National Institute of Food Technology Entrepreneurship and Management, Kundli

the Indian Institute of Food Processing Technology, Thanjavur.

As per the statement of object annexed to the Bill, these institutions are separate autonomous bodies exclusively on food processing sector, and provide solutions to the challenges faced by stakeholders of the sector, including farmers.

The Bill therefore seeks to enable these institutes to exercise functional autonomy and start new innovative courses and to provide for instructions and research in food technology, entrepreneurship and management.

First introduced in the House in February 2019, was passed by the Rajya Sabha on March 15, 2021, during the Budget Session. However, it could not be discussed properly in the Lok Sabha, due disturbance of house proceedings amid opposition protests.

Some of its salient features are discussed below:

Board of Governors

The Bill provides for a Board of Governors, which will be the principal executive body of the institute, responsible for the general superintendence, direction, and control of the affairs of the institute.

Constitution of Board

The Board of Governors will consist of 16 members including:

a Chairperson, who is a distinguished person in the field of food science, technology or management, or other such field;

Director, Dean, Registrar, and faculty members;

representatives of central and state governments;

representatives of FSSAI and the Indian Council of Agricultural Research; and the Indian Council of Agricultural Research; and

representatives of the food processing industry.

Powers & Functions of the Board

Taking administrative policy decisions;

Examining and approving annual budget estimates and development plans;

Establishing departments, faculties or schools of studies, and initiating courses or programmes of study;

Creating academic, administrative, and other posts, and determining their terms of service and appointment.

Senate

The Senate will be the institute's principal academic body, responsible for maintenance of standards of instruction, education, and examination in the institute. It will comprise of:

Director as the Chairperson;

Registrar;

All full-time faculty at the level of a Professor; and

Three academicians nominated by the Board from the fields of food science, technology and management.

Council

The Bill provides for the establishment of a Council for coordinating activities of all institutes and facilitating interactions for performance improvement. Its functions include laying down the policy framework for functioning of the institutes, and reviewing the achievement of policy objectives, among others. The Council will consist of 13 members including:

Minister of Food Processing Industries as the Chairperson;

Minister of the State for Food Processing Industries;

Representatives of the ministries related to food processing, higher education, and finance;

Chairperson, FSSAI;

CEO, NITI Aayog; and

Three industry representatives and three academicians from the field of food processing.