

New technology, innovation conclave to 'replace' Science Congress to be held in November

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is expected to attend the inauguration of ESTIC; the Indian Science Congress has not been held after 2023 following a spat between DST and ISCA

Updated – September 06, 2025 02:40 am IST – NEW DELHI



JACOB KOSHY



The Emerging Science, Technology and Innovation Conclave may 'replace' the Indian Science Congress, the oldest congregation of scientists in India with a rich history predating Independence. Photo: estic.dst.gov.in

Signalling a break from the past, the Department of Science and Technology (DST) is set to organise the first-ever Emerging Science, Technology and Innovation Conclave (ESTIC) in November.

ESTIC may 'replace' the Indian Science Congress, the oldest congregation of scientists in India with a rich history predating Independence. Over the years, it has gone into oblivion, with the last being held in 2023.

"You could see it as a replacement of the Indian Science Congress," a senior official told *The Hindu*.

Abhay Karandikar, Secretary, DST, did not respond to a request for clarification on whether ESTIC will indeed replace the Science Congress.

Since 2015, the government has nurtured the India International Science Festival (IISF) that is organised by the science-related departments. It has among its organisers Vijnana Bharti – a science popularisation outfit affiliated with the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh.

"The IISF is more of a festival, a 'mela' (fair), and meant to popularise science among students and young people. It is not a forum where scientists and technologists can discuss bigger themes of science, technology and innovation," said the official.

This year, the IISF is expected to be held at the Panjab University, Chandigarh.

The IISF does not usually see participation by international Nobel Laureates, nor does Prime Minister Narendra Modi visit it in person. However, he has made virtual appearances or sent video messages for the IISF.

The ESTIC website says that Mr. Modi is expected to be present at its inaugural session.

Traditionally, the Indian Science Congress, organised by the Indian Science Congress Association (ISCA), Kolkata, and funded by the DST and held in the first week of January, has always had the Prime Minister at the inaugural. However, the last time Prime Minister Modi appeared in person was at the 107th Science Congress at Lovely Professional University, Ludhiana, in 2020. The following two years, the event was not held citing the pandemic.

In 2023, Mr. Modi made an appearance, but only online, at the 108th edition held at the Rashtrasant Tukdoji Maharaj University in Nagpur. In 2024 and this year, the Science Congress was not held due to a spat between DST and ISCA's executive body over the organisation of the event. DST has said that it would no longer fund ISCA.

The inaugural ESTIC will be held at the Bharat Mandapam here from November 3-4. All the science-related Ministries, ranging from atomic energy to space and information technology, will be involved in it.

According to the ESTIC website, there will be 11 thematic technical sessions and 75 exhibition stalls by 'deep tech' startups at the event. Nobel Laureate Andre Geim (2010, Physics) is expected to make an appearance. Jean-Yves Le Gall, former president of the French Space Agency, and Professor Masaru Tomita, Keio University, Japan, are among the foreign dignitaries expected.

In a meeting earlier this week, Science Minister Jitendra Singh said that ESTIC will "showcase cutting-edge research, deep-tech breakthroughs, and thought-provoking discussions, igniting a new era of scientific leadership towards Viksit Bharat 2047."

Published – September 05, 2025 10:49 pm IST

In Case You Missed It



TIFF 2025 |
Sydney
Sweeney lands
a knockout...



GST reforms
will cause
₹3,700 crore
revenue loss t...



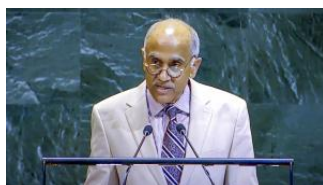
Mob vandalises
National
Emblem at
Hazratbal...



T.N. CM Stalin
unveils portrait
of Periyar on
Oxford...



About 47%
Ministers in
India face
criminal case...



Collateral
consequences
of Ukraine
conflict,...



Delhi NCR-
based The
Design Village
to open satelli...



Western troops
in Ukraine
would be
legitimate...

