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THE Asia University Rankings 2026 — IISc 43rd, India Has Most Universities But None in Top 40

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CURATED & WRITTEN BY

**Bharat Choudhary**

UPSC Educator & Content Creator

[in linkedin.com/in/epicbharat](https://www.linkedin.com/in/epicbharat)

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THE Asia University Rankings 2026 — IISc 43rd, India Has Most Universities But None in Top 40

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✓ Every fact web-verified against primary sources

WHY IN NEWS

The **Times Higher Education (THE) Asia University Rankings 2026** were released, featuring **929 universities** from across Asia. **India** has the **highest number of institutions** in the rankings (**128 universities**) — more than any other country — yet **no Indian university placed in the top 40**. The **Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru** remains India’s highest-ranked institution at **43rd** (down from 38th last year). **Tsinghua University (China)** topped the list for the **8th consecutive year**.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

INDICATOR	VALUE
Rankings edition	THE Asia University Rankings 2026
Total institutions ranked	929 universities
India’s representation	128 universities — highest of any country
India’s top-ranked	IISc (Indian Institute of Science), Bengaluru — 43rd
IISc’s previous rank	38th (slipped 5 places)
Any Indian university in top 40	No
Overall #1	Tsinghua University, China (8th consecutive year)
China in top 10	5 of the top 10 spots
Ranking publisher	Times Higher Education (THE), UK

TOP UNIVERSITIES — ASIA RANKINGS 2026

RANK	UNIVERSITY	COUNTRY
1	Tsinghua University	China
2	Peking University	China
3–10	Dominated by Chinese, Japanese, South Korean, Singapore universities	—
43	Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru	India

INDIA'S PERFORMANCE — ANALYSIS

The Paradox: Numbers vs. Quality

India has the **largest representation by count** (128 universities) but **no institution in the top 40** — illustrating the gap between **scale and research quality**.

METRIC	INDIA	CHINA
Universities in rankings	128 (highest)	—
Universities in top 10	0	5
Top-ranked institution	IISc at 43	Tsinghua at 1
Research quality score	Lower	Dominant

Why India Underperforms on Research Metrics

- 1 **R&D spending:** India spends ~0.65–0.7% of GDP on R&D (China: ~2.5%; USA: ~3.5%)
- 2 **International collaboration:** Indian universities have lower international co-authorship ratios
- 3 **Citation impact:** Lower citations per paper vs Chinese/Korean/Singapore institutions
- 4 **Industry-academia linkage:** Weak patent generation and industry income per institution

THE RANKING METHODOLOGY

PILLAR	WEIGHT	WHAT IT MEASURES
Teaching	25%	Learning environment, student-staff ratio, PhD awards
Research Environment	25%	Research income, productivity, reputation survey
Research Quality	30%	Citation impact, research strength, excellence
International Outlook	7.5%	International students, staff, co-authorships
Industry	12.5%	Knowledge transfer, industry income, patents

Note: The **QS Asia University Rankings** (a separate ranking by Quacquarelli Symonds) has **different results** — do not confuse the two. In QS Asia 2026, IIT Delhi leads India at 59th, IIT Madras at 70th.

IISC BENGALURU — ABOUT

FEATURE	DETAIL
Full name	Indian Institute of Science
Established	1909 (proposed by Jamshetji Tata; set up with Mysore state support + Tata endowment)
Status	Institute of National Importance under the IISc Act
Location	Bengaluru, Karnataka
Type	Primarily a postgraduate research university (UG from 2011 via Bachelor of Research programme)
Nobel laureates	CV Raman (Physics, 1930) — worked at IISc
NIRF rank	Consistently #1 in India (Research Universities category)
QS World Ranking	Among the top 200 globally

UPSC RELEVANCE

PAPER	ANGLE
GS2 — Governance	Higher education policy, NEP 2020, research universities, HEFA, PM-USHA
GS2 — Governance	Ranking systems — role in attracting FDI, talent, and international students
GS3 — Economy	R&D investment, knowledge economy, India's innovation ecosystem

Mains Keywords: THE Asia University Rankings, IISc, research university, R&D spending, knowledge economy, NEP 2020, higher education quality vs quantity, Tsinghua University, citation impact, international collaboration

Prelims Facts Corner

ITEM	FACT
THE Asia Rankings 2026	929 universities; IISc 43rd (down from 38th)
India's representation	128 universities — most of any country
India in top 40	None
#1 overall	Tsinghua University, China (8th consecutive year)
China in top 10	5 of 10
IISc established	1909; Bengaluru; proposed by Jamshetji Tata
IISc status	Institute of National Importance
India R&D spending	~0.65–0.7% of GDP (vs China ~2.5%)
THE vs QS	Two separate rankings — different results; QS Asia: IIT Delhi leads India at 59th

Source: THE Asia University Rankings 2026 — IISc 43rd, India Has Most Universities But None in Top 40 — [Ujjayari.com](https://ujjayari.com) | Free UPSC & State PCS Current Affairs

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