

12 December 2025

Hon'ble Shri Rao Inderjit Singh
Minister of State (Independent Charge)
Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation
Government of India, New Delhi

Hon'ble Sir,

My name is Partha Majumder. I had written to you on October 23, 2025, in connection with the ISI Bill that your Ministry is planning to table in the Parliament. My earlier letter to you is attached.

I grew up in ISI. I joined ISI as a student in 1970 and received my education in ISI. Subsequently, for many decades I served on the faculty of ISI, held many administrative positions in ISI and superannuated a few years ago. I am currently an Emeritus Professor of ISI.

I am certain that you are aware of everything that I am going to state in the remaining part of my letter to you. We are just short of five days from the historical date of December 17, 1931, when Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis held a meeting of a few eminent persons that sowed the seeds of the Indian Statistical Institute Society and the ISI. A few months later, ISI was formally established.

The ISI adopted "**Unity in Diversity**" as its motto. The structure and functioning of ISI resembles a *federal* system (with its seat of administrative power in the headquarters at Kolkata and with centres in many cities of India that have partial, but not complete, administrative power) and is *democratic* (with elected representatives on committees that administer the institute). is completely synchronized with its motto. Federalism upholds diversity; Democracy celebrates unity.

In 1959, an Act was passed in the Parliament of India, declaring the ISI as an "institution of National Importance."

Now, your Ministry is poised to repeal the ISI Act, abolish the ISI Society and bring structural changes in ISI through a Bill, that is bound to adversely affect its functioning. After the Bill is implemented, ISI can no longer justify "Unity and Diversity" as its motto, because the Bill (a) seeks to abolish the present semblance of a federal structure, and (b) proposes to change the current democratic and autonomous functioning by replacing it with a mode of functioning that is essentially top-down..

There is no justification provided by your Ministry based on discussions within the ISI that it is necessary to repeal the Act and strip ISI of its stature of an "institution of National Importance." In the past decades, the ISI has had many reviews by committees constituted by the Govt. of India. No Review Committee has, to the best of my knowledge, recommended that the ISI Act be repealed.

Like every institution in India, there are shortcomings in the functioning of ISI. These shortcomings can be amended through internal discussions. It may be necessary to carry out some restructuring of ISI to improve ISI's functioning and to ensure non-recurrence of its shortcomings; *these are entirely possible by appropriate modifications of some by-laws of the ISI Society*. It is not necessary to repeal the ISI Act and abolish the ISI Society.

Finally, I would like to recall that *ISI served as a model for the first institute of statistics in the United States* (North Carolina Statistics Institute, now Research Triangle Institute) established by Gertrude Cox. I am not aware of any other institute in India that has served as a model for an institute in the

USA. We need to be proud of ISI, retain its structure and organisation, while taking steps to improve its functioning through discussions both internal and by involving external experts.

I, once again, appeal to you to not repeal the ISI Act and to not abolish the ISI Society. I am sure that you are aware that most persons currently in ISI and a large number of past associates and well-wishers of ISI concur with the sentiments that I have expressed and my appeal to you.

With kind regards,

Partha P. Majumder

Copy to:

Secretary, MoSPI

Director, ISI

President, ISI Society

A few eminent well-wishers of ISI