Shekhar C. Mande appointed to the UN TFM's 10-Member Group

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News

Prof. Shekhar C. Mande, President of the Indian National Science Academy (INSA) and former Director General of CSIR, has been appointed for 2026–2028 to the '10-Member Group' that supports the UN Technology Facilitation Mechanism (TFM). He is listed among the current members on the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) website; the news was reported on 19 November. The group's members – high-level representatives of civil society, the private sector and the scientific community – are appointed by the UN Secretary-General, and only 10 people from across the world serve on it. Marian Dorcas Quain (Ghana) and Giorgio Rossi (Italy) are co-chairs; other members are from Japan, Brazil, Sweden, China, Nigeria, Russia and the Maldives. Working with the UN Inter-Agency Task Team on Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) for the SDGs (IATT), the group prepares the annual STI Forum and supports the '2030 Connect' online platform. This group is different from ECOSOC's Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD), to which India was elected as a member State for 2027–2030. Mande, a structural biologist known for work on the protein structures of the TB bacterium (Mycobacterium tuberculosis), won the Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar Prize in 2005.

Key facts for the exam

Point	Details
Appointment	UN 10-Member Group supporting the TFM
Term	2026–2028

Point	Details
Appointed by	UN Secretary-General
Co-chairs	Marian Dorcas Quain (Ghana), Giorgio Rossi (Italy)
Role	Annual STI Forum, '2030 Connect' platform
Mande – posts	INSA President; ex-DG, CSIR; ex-Director, NCCS Pune
Field	Structural biology – protein structure, TB bacterium
Award	Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar Prize (2005)
Not to confuse	India is a CSTD member State for 2027–30

Background

- UN framework: the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on financing for development (July 2015) decided to set up the Technology Facilitation Mechanism, and paragraph 70 of the 2030 Agenda (Sept 2015) launched it. Its four parts: the IATT (an inter-agency task team of UN entities), the 10-Member Group, the annual STI Forum and the '2030 Connect' platform.
- INSA: founded in Calcutta on 7 January 1935 as the National Institute of Sciences of India; renamed the Indian National Science Academy in 1970; headquartered in New Delhi. Mande is its current President.
- Awards: in 2023 the Centre set up the Rashtriya Vigyan Puraskar in place of many older science awards – four categories: Vigyan Ratna, Vigyan Shri, Vigyan Yuva–Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar and Vigyan Team; per the scheme, they are announced on 11 May (National Technology Day) and conferred on 23 August (National Space Day).
- Science: born in 1962, Mande earned his PhD in molecular biophysics at IISc Bengaluru (1991), directed the National Centre for Cell Science (NCCS), Pune (2011–18) and became CSIR Director General in 2018. His field – the structure and function of proteins, including those of the TB bacterium – helps drug design.

Tamil Nadu link: The 'Ramachandran plot', a basic tool of protein structural biology, was developed at the University of Madras – G.N. Ramachandran (born in Ernakulam; moved from IISc Bengaluru to the University of Madras in 1952), C. Ramakrishnan and V. Sasisekharan published it in the Journal of Molecular Biology in 1963. Mande's field grew on this Madras foundation.

Frequently asked questions

What is this news about?

Prof. Shekhar C. Mande, President of the Indian National Science Academy (INSA) and former Director General of CSIR, has been appointed for 2026–2028 to the '10-Member Group' that supports the UN Technology Facilitation Mechanism (TFM).

What are the key facts to remember for the exam?

Appointment: UN 10-Member Group supporting the TFM; Term: 2026–2028; Appointed by: UN Secretary-General; Co-chairs: Marian Dorcas Quain (Ghana), Giorgio Rossi (Italy).

What is the background to this news?

UN framework: the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on financing for development (July 2015) decided to set up the Technology Facilitation Mechanism, and paragraph 70 of the 2030 Agenda (Sept 2015) launched it. Its four parts: the IATT (an inter-agency task team of UN entities), the 10-Member Group, the annual STI Forum and the '2030 Connect' platform.

Practice questions (with answers)

1. Which 2015 document decided to set up the UN Technology Facilitation Mechanism (TFM), which Mande's group supports?

A) Addis Ababa Action Agenda

B) Sendai Framework

C) Paris Agreement

D) Kyoto Protocol

Answer: A – Explanation: The Addis Ababa Action Agenda on financing for development (July 2015); para 70 of the 2030 Agenda (Sept 2015) launched the TFM.

2. Who appoints the members of the '10-Member Group' that supports the TFM?

A) UNGA President

B) ECOSOC President

C) UNESCO Director-General

D) UN Secretary-General

Answer: D – Explanation: The UN Secretary-General – the group helps prepare the annual STI Forum and supports the '2030 Connect' platform.

3. The Indian National Science Academy (INSA), which Mande heads, was founded in 1935 under what name?

A) Indian Science Congress

B) National Institute of Sciences of India

C) Indian Academy of Sciences

D) Asiatic Society

Answer: B – Explanation: The National Institute of Sciences of India – inaugurated in Calcutta on 7 Jan 1935; renamed INSA in 1970; HQ New Delhi.

4. The 'Ramachandran plot', key to Mande's field of protein structural biology, was developed in 1963 at which university?

A) University of Madras

B) IISc Bengaluru

C) University of Calcutta

D) Annamalai University

Answer: A – Explanation: University of Madras – by G.N. Ramachandran, C. Ramakrishnan and V. Sasisekharan; it shows the allowed backbone angles of proteins.

5. Which national science awards, set up in 2023, replaced many older science awards and kept the Bhatnagar name for a young-scientist category?

A) INSPIRE Award

B) Padma Awards

C) Rashtriya Vigyan Puraskar

D) National Teachers' Award

Answer: C – Explanation: Rashtriya Vigyan Puraskar – Ratna, Shri, Yuva–Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar and Team; announced on 11 May. Mande won the Bhatnagar Prize in 2005.

Sources: UN SDGs – sdgs.un.org/tfm (10-Member Group list); PTI via ThePrint, 9 Apr 2026 – theprint.in (India elected to CSTD 2027–2030); News On AIR, 9 Apr 2026 – newsonair.gov.in; INSA – insaindia.res.in (statement, Mande profile); PIB (Rashtriya Vigyan Puraskar); Deccan Herald; MoES – moes.gov.in (Mande biodata); Protein Science (G.N. Ramachandran). © Shanmugam IAS Academy.