Private Universities Amendment Bill gets Governor's assent: Minister

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News

Higher Education Minister P. Viswanathan told reporters in Chennai on 21 November 2026 that Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar has given assent to the Tamil Nadu Private Universities (Amendment) Bill, 2026 (DT Next). The Assembly passed the Bill on 8 September 2026. It amends the Tamil Nadu Private Universities Act, 2019: instead of 100 acres of contiguous land, 12 acres will do within Greater Chennai Corporation, 18 acres in other corporations and municipalities, and 25 acres elsewhere. The mandatory permanent endowment fund falls from ₹50 crore to ₹25 crore. When the Governor assented to 12 of 13 Bills in September 2026, this Bill was held back; PTI and Deccan Chronicle reported it had been reserved for the President's consideration (DT Next called this speculation). The Minister's statement that the Governor has now given assent is reported by DT Next, Dinamalar and Maalaimalar; the Gazette notification has not yet been seen. He said it would help cut the outflow of foreign exchange from students going abroad by offering comparable facilities in the State. In the Assembly, parties including the CPI(M) and the PMK, and a CPI MLA, opposed it, fearing commercialisation of education.

Key facts for the exam

Point	Details
Bill	TN Private Universities (Amendment) Bill, 2026

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Amends	TN Private Universities Act, 2019
Passed	Assembly, 8 September 2026
Assent announced	Minister P. Viswanathan, 21 November 2026 (Gazette not yet seen)
Land (earlier)	100 contiguous acres
Land (now)	Chennai 12 / other urban 18 / elsewhere 25 acres
Endowment fund	₹50 crore → ₹25 crore
Basis	Union Task Force on Compliance Reduction and Deregulation

Background

- Under Article 200 of the Constitution, the Governor may assent to a Bill passed by the Legislature, withhold assent, return it (if not a Money Bill) for reconsideration, or reserve it for the President. The President decides on a reserved Bill under Article 201.
- In the Seventh Schedule, 'incorporation and regulation of universities' is State List Entry 32, while 'coordination and determination of standards in higher education' is Union List Entry 66, under which the UGC Act, 1956 was made; State private universities must be listed by the UGC under Section 2(f).
- The Tamil Nadu Private Universities Act, 2019 set the 100-acre and ₹50-crore conditions. An amendment Bill brought by the previous government in October 2025 (with a 'brownfield' route for colleges to become universities) was withdrawn in February 2026 after opposition.
- Following a Union Home Ministry directive in November 2025, Raj Bhavans in the States were renamed 'Lok Bhavan'; the Governor's residence in Chennai is now Lok Bhavan. The Gross Enrolment Ratio in higher education is published by the Union Education Ministry's AISHE survey.

Tamil Nadu link: This news concerns a Tamil Nadu law. As per AISHE reports, Tamil Nadu is among the leading States in the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in higher education, well above the national average. Some cases on Governor–State powers are pending before the courts.

Frequently asked questions

What is this news about?

Higher Education Minister P. Viswanathan told reporters in Chennai on 21 November 2026 that Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar has given assent to the Tamil Nadu Private Universities (Amendment) Bill, 2026 (DT Next).

What are the key facts to remember for the exam?

Bill: TN Private Universities (Amendment) Bill, 2026; Amends: TN Private Universities Act, 2019; Passed: Assembly, 8 September 2026; Assent announced: Minister P. Viswanathan, 21 November 2026 (Gazette not yet seen).

What is the background to this news?

Under Article 200 of the Constitution, the Governor may assent to a Bill passed by the Legislature, withhold assent, return it (if not a Money Bill) for reconsideration, or reserve it for the President.

Practice questions (with answers)

1. Which Article deals with the Governor assenting to, withholding assent from, or reserving a Bill passed by the State Legislature?

A) Article 163

B) Article 213

C) Article 356

D) Article 200

Answer: D – Explanation: Article 200. Article 163 – Council of Ministers to aid and advise; 213 – Ordinances; 356 – President's Rule in a State.

2. In which year did the University Grants Commission (UGC) become a statutory body through an Act of Parliament?

A) 1948

B) 1953

C) 1956

D) 1966

Answer: C – Explanation: 1956 – the UGC Act. Maulana Azad inaugurated the UGC in 1953; 1948 was the Radhakrishnan University Education Commission.

3. 'Coordination and determination of standards in institutions for higher education' falls in which list of the Seventh Schedule?

A) State List

B) Concurrent List

C) Union List

D) Residuary powers

Answer: C – Explanation: Union List Entry 66. Incorporation and regulation of universities is State List Entry 32.

4. Under which Article of the Constitution does the President decide on a State Bill reserved by the Governor for the President's consideration?

A) Article 201

B) Article 254

C) Article 123

D) Article 74

Answer: A – Explanation: Article 201. The Governor may reserve a Bill under Article 200; Article 254 deals with Union–State law conflict, 123 with the President's ordinances and 74 with the Council of Ministers' advice.

5. Which survey of the Union Education Ministry publishes the State-wise Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in higher education?

A) NSSO round

B) AISHE

C) UDISE+

D) NIRF

Answer: B – Explanation: AISHE – All India Survey on Higher Education; TN ranks high in GER. UDISE+ covers schools; NIRF ranks institutions.

Sources: DT Next, 21 Nov 2026 (Minister's statement); DT Next, 9 Sep 2026 (passage, Task Force basis); DT Next, 20 Feb 2026 (2025 Bill withdrawn); DT Next, 30 Nov 2025 (Lok Bhavan); Dinamalar, Maalaimalar (21 Nov 2026); PTI/ThePrint, 18 Sep 2026; Deccan Chronicle, 19 Sep 2026; Ministry of Education – AISHE. © Shanmugam IAS Academy.