

## Institution of National Importance (INI) tag

**Prelims:** Current events of national and international importance | Polity & Governance

### Why in News?

In December 2025, a Parliamentary Standing Committee on education recommended that the Union government consider granting the Auroville Foundation the status of an Institution of National Importance (INI).

- **Institutes of National Importance (INIs)** - These are premier public bodies, formulated under the Government of India through the Act of Parliament.
- **Purpose** - To develop highly skilled professionals in fields like engineering, medicine, management, science and so on.
- **Legal Basis** - Mentioned in the Constitution (7<sup>th</sup> Schedule, Entry 63) and reinforced by the UGC Act, 1956 (Section 22).
- **Examples of INI** - IITs, IIMs, AIIMS, NITs, etc.
- **Present status** - As of mid-2024, India has around 171 INIs, with categories like 23 IITs, 20 AIIMS, 21 IIMs, and many others making up the total.

### Benefits of INIs

- Greater independence allows institutions to improve **efficiency, quality, and accountability**.
- Access to **enhanced financial support** from the government.
- Ability to **deliver higher standards** of education and strengthen research infrastructure.
- Capacity for quicker decisions without bureaucratic delays and very limited political interference in day-to-day functioning.
- Potential to offer more scholarships to deserving students.
- Opportunity to expand sports facilities, seminars, and extracurricular activities.

### Quick Fact

**Auroville & INI Status**

- Auroville is an **experimental township** located in Tamil Nadu, near Pondicherry.
- Founded in 1968 to realise human unity and the transformation of consciousness.
- The Parliamentary committee suggests amending the **Auroville Foundation Act (1988)** to recognise Auroville as an INI.
- **Reason** – UNESCO has passed multiple resolutions since 1966 supporting Auroville, which would acknowledge Auroville's role in international understanding and peace promotion.
- **Concerns of Residents** – The INI status would place Auroville under a Parliament-defined framework, reducing its autonomy, and the township's unique experimental character could fade.

## References

1. [The Hindu | From universal township to national institution?](#)
2. [Digital Sansad | Institutes of National Importance](#)

