

installed in the country. In addition, around 8,000 remote villages and hamlets have been supported for electrification with solar energy systems.

The production of solar energy devices/systems and their utilization is regularly increasing. However, the high initial cost of solar energy systems is a barrier in large scale utilization for power generation. The Ministry is supporting research and development to reduce the cost, improve the efficiency and performance of solar energy systems to increase their share. The National Action Plan on Climate Change has also identified development of solar energy in the country by setting up a Solar Mission.

The Ministry has taken several other steps to increase the utilization of solar energy in the country, which include (i) taking up expanded programmes to encourage utilization of solar energy systems through subsidy or soft loans, (ii) incentive to manufacturers, commercial users and power project developers (iii) support to Akshaya Urja shops to provide additional channels for sale and after-sales servicing of solar energy systems, and (iv) create awareness through print and electronic media about the solar energy systems and their benefits.

Increasing wind power capacity

1488.SHRI Y.P. TRIVEDI: Will the Minister of NEW AND RENEWABLE ENERGY be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of any measures that have been taken by Government to increase wind power capacity in the country, particularly in Maharashtra;
- (b) whether any study has been carried out to explore the potential of wind power; and
- (c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF NEW AND RENEWABLE ENERGY (SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR): (a) Measures taken by the Government to encourage setting up of wind power projects in the country, including the State of Maharashtra, are concessional import duty on certain components of wind electric generator, excise duty exemption, ten years' tax holiday on income generated from wind power projects, benefit of accelerated depreciation, loan from Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency (IREDA) and other financial institutions. Technical support, including detailed wind resource assessment to identify further potential sites, is provided by the Centre for Wind Energy Technology (C-WET), Chennai. This apart, preferential tariff is being provided for wind power in most of the potential States including in the State of Maharashtra.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. The Wind Resource Assessment studies carried out in 20 States/UTs have identified 216 potential sites in the country including 31 potential sites in Maharashtra, with annual mean wind power density of 200 watt/square meter or more at 50 meter elevation which are considered suitable for setting up of wind power projects. A wind power potential of 48560 MW in the country including 4580 MW in Maharashtra, has been estimated from these potential sites.

Foreign investment in wind energy

1489.SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of NEW AND RENEWABLE ENERGY be pleased to state: