

(b) A committee has been constituted to give its report on fixing the Inland Vessel (I.V.) limits and make port-wise recommendations, within a period of three months.

Research and experiments of ISRO

3377. SHRI MOHD. ALI KHAN:

SHRIMATI T. RATNA BAI:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the ISRO is conducting more researches and experiments on the change in the atmosphere and climate; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the amount spent for this purpose in the Eleventh and Twelfth Plan period?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) In order to support studies in the field of atmosphere and climate change, Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) conducts researches and experiments using data from satellite and ground based observations. These include - experiments by means of balloons carrying radiosonde and ozonesonde to measure temperature, humidity, pressure and ozone; sets up network of observatories with instruments viz. Mesosphere-Stratosphere-Troposphere (MST) Radar for providing estimates of atmospheric parameters on a continuous basis, Multi-Wavelength Radiometer to measure aerosols, Aethalometer for black carbon concentrations, Nephelometer for scattering coefficient, Quartz Crystal Microbalance for particle size, mass and density; Boundary Layer Lidar for chemical pollution studies.

ISRO in collaboration with national laboratories and academic institutions conducts studies on landuse/landcover dynamics, atmospheric aerosols and trace gas chemistry, energy and mass exchange in the agricultural systems, chemical pollution and atmospheric carbon sequestration.

Amount spent for this purpose during the Eleventh Five Year Plan period is ₹ 217.34 crores. The plan outlay for the Twelfth Five Year Plan period for this purpose is ₹ 457.46 crores.

Growth rate in steel production

3378. SHRI N.K. SINGH: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that the steel production had a growth rate of 0.5 per cent in February, 2013 against its 8.7 per cent growth in February, 2012;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether Government is proposing any corrective measures to reverse this trend; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL (SHRI BENI PRASAD VERMA): (a) and (b) No, Sir. Provisional data released by Joint Plant Committee (JPC) indicates that production for sale of total finished steel increased by 0.5% in February, 2013 as compared to a growth of 4.3% (and not 8.7%) of February, 2012.

(c) and (d) Steel being a deregulated sector, the role of the Government is that of a facilitator providing a conducive policy environment. The Government has taken the following steps to support the competitive production and capacity growth of the steel industry.

- (i) The Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) namely Steel Authority of India Ltd. (SAIL), Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Ltd. (RINL) and NMDC Ltd., are in the process of implementing significant expansion in the crude/finished steel capacities in their respective brownfield/Greenfield locations.
- (ii) An Inter Ministerial Group (IMG) has been set up by the Government for effective coordination and to expedite implementation of various investment projects in the steel sector.
- (iii) Import of critical raw materials for steel industry such as coking coal, non-coking coal, scrap etc. are subject to zero or very low levels of customs duty.
- (iv) To encourage domestic value addition and improve domestic iron ore availability, duty on export of iron ore has been increased to 30 per cent.
- (v) The Ministry of Steel routinely consults the industry to be apprised of the constraints to growth and recommends necessary corrective measures as and when necessary, to other concerned ministries.