

**Encouragement of young minds to study space**

923. SHRI TARUN VIJAY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

- (a) Government's plan for encouraging young minds to study space science; and
- (b) whether there are any plans to establish an exclusive university for space sciences, if so, the details thereof, if not, the reasons thereof and whether this could be considered in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (DR. JITENDRA SINGH): (a) Department of Space (DOS) has taken the following measures for encouraging young minds towards space science research:

- (i) ISRO Space Science Promotion Scheme (ISRO-SSPS) is an initiative intended towards supporting and strengthening of research in space science in universities. The scheme, initiated during 2008-09 period, includes-M.Sc/M.Tech fellowships to meritorious students, one time grant for laboratory augmentation and support for visiting scientists/guest faculties.
- (ii) ISRO's Sponsored Research (RESPOND) programme is intended for encouraging academia, Junior Research Fellows, young researchers to participate and contribute in various space programme related research activities in Indian universities and institutes.
- (iii) The space science and planetary missions, viz. Chandrayaan-1, Mars Orbiter Mission, ASTROSAT, undertaken by ISRO renew the interest of young minds towards space science.
- (iv) Department of Space regularly organises workshops, exhibitions and outreach programmes to create excitement amongst students in space science and technology.

(b) Department of Space has established Indian Institute of Space Science and Technology (IIST), Deemed University at Thiruvananthapuram, to provide specialised education in the areas of space technology. The institute is the first of its kind in the country to offer high quality education at the undergraduate, graduate, doctoral and post-doctoral levels in the areas related to space science and technology and its applications.

**State plans under Smart City Scheme**

924. SHRI D. KUPENDRA REDDY: Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether a large number of States sought extension for submitting their plans under the Smart City Scheme;