

of the equipment only. The equipment cost is around ₹ 1 lakh and the other costs would depend on the location of the centre. The technology has been transferred to two industries, namely M/s Rajasthan Electronics and Instruments (REIL), Jaipur and M/s Alpine Technologies, Surat, Gujarat for manufacturing and commercialization.

Funds for LIGO-India project

2885. PROF. M. V. RAJEEV GOWDA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether funding has been approved for the Laser Interferometer Gravitational-wave Observatory (LIGO)-India project;

(b) if so, the details of the amount sanctioned so far, if not, the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether the proposed project seeks to collaborate with other countries working on gravitational waves, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (DR. JITENDRA SINGH): (a) to (c) The Government has given 'in-principle' approval for setting up Laser Interferometer Gravitational Wave Observatory (LIGO) in India. The LIGO-India project will establish a state-of-the-art gravitational wave observatory on the Indian soil in collaboration with the LIGO Laboratory in the U.S. run by Caltech and Massachusetts Institute of Technology. The project will bring unprecedented opportunities for our scientists and engineers to dig deeper into the realm of gravitational wave and take global leadership in this new astronomical frontier. LIGO-India will also bring considerable opportunities in cutting edge technology for the Indian industry which will be engaged in the construction of eight kilometre long beam tube at ultra-high vacuum on a levelled terrain. The LIGO-India project will be jointly co-ordinated and executed by three premier Indian lead institutions viz., the Inter-University Centre for Astronomy and Astrophysics (IUCAA), Pune, the Institute for Plasma Research (IPR), Gandhinagar and the Raja Ramanna Centre for Advanced Technology (RRCAT), Indore. Some of the universities in the country will also participate in the project.

Under the Mega Science Projects, an amount of ₹ 105 crore has been made in Twelfth Plan outlay by Department of Atomic Energy (DAE)-Department of Science and Technology (DST) towards LIGO-India. Out of which, the share of contribution of DST will be ₹ 55 crore including 50% of seed-funding amount of ₹ 9.70 crore and DAE's share would be ₹ 50 crore. No financial sanction has been issued so far for the project.