

considered only after rectification of the deficiencies in the documents. General Financial Rules provide that grant may be considered for proposals in respect of previous 24 months on the date of sanction of grant.

New satellite launch pads

1429. SHRIMATI KANIMOZHI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is considering to build new satellite launch pads in the country;

(b) whether the Kulasekarapattinam has been proposed by Government to be ideal location for being a launch pad and if so, the steps taken/proposed to be taken by Government to build a new satellite launch pad; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SPACE (DR. JITENDRA SINGH): (a) to (c) The Indian satellite launching station located at Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota has two launch pads - the First Launch Pad (FLP) and the Second Launch Pad (SLP). A Second Vehicle Assembly Building (SVAB) is being established at the Second Launch Pad to overcome the limitation in the number of vehicles that can be assembled and integrated in a year, which is expected to be ready by the beginning of next year. In addition to enabling a significant increase in the launch frequency from the existing two launch pads, the SVAB can also cater to the requirements of a third launch pad at Sriharikota in future.

Updates on Mars orbiter spacecraft

1430. SHRI SAMBHAJI CHHATRAPATI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Mars Orbiter Spacecraft which had entered into Mars orbit on September 24, 2014 is performing as per the expectations;

(b) whether Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) scientists have started interpretation of data and photographs being transmitted by the Spacecraft; and

(c) if so, the highlights of the observations drawn by space scientists?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SPACE (DR. JITENDRA SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir. Mars Orbiter Mission has successfully completed 1000 days in its orbit on June 19, 2017, surviving well beyond its designed mission life of six months. All Scientific payloads continue to provide valuable data of Mars surface and its atmosphere.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Mars Colour Camera on-board MOM has acquired more than 700 images of Martian surface. MOM atlas is published and updates on MOM images are regularly provided in ISRO website. The observations drawn by scientists have been published in 20 scientific papers in peer reviewed journals. The archived scientific data has been released to public for free download and scientific research. About 1380 registered users have downloaded more than 370 GB of data.

Delay in releasing MPLAD funds from Karnataka

1431. SHRI B.K HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION be pleased to state:

(a) the details of Members of Parliament from Karnataka whose Members of Parliament Local Area Development (MPLAD) Funds have not been released, so far;

(b) the reason for the delays and the persons responsible for such delays; and

(c) the corrective measures taken to prevent such delays in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI D.V. SADANANDA GOWDA): (a) and (b) Release of funds under the Members of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MPLADS) at the Central Government level and implementation of the same at the District level is governed by the provisions contained in the Guidelines on MPLADS. Funds are released by the Ministry on receipt of requisite eligible documents from the concerned Nodal District Authorities of the State Governments.

The details of Hon'ble Members of Parliament (Rajya Sabha) from Karnataka whose MPLADS fund is due for release and the reasons for delay are given in the Statement (*See below*).