

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRI VIJAY SAMPLA): (a) The Foundation Stone of the NISD Building in Dwarka, New Delhi was laid by the Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment on 5th November, 2015.

(b) As per the information received from CPWD, the plot was covered with shrubs, vegetation, and small bushes only and was accumulated with some debris. The plot was not covered with green trees.

(c) to (e) Question do not arise.

#### **Electricity subsidy to SC and ST farmers**

2047. SHRI RAMKUMAR VERMA: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government intends to increase the subsidy amount and maximum age limit from 55 years to 65 years for electricity subsidy for SC and ST farmers;

(b) whether Government intends to increase the subsidy amount of ₹ 10,000/- to ₹ 50,000/- for people of BPL families of SC and ST so as to provide benefits to more such families; and

(c) whether Government intends to release ₹ 60 crore during the financial year 2017-18 under Special Central Assistance for Scheduled Castes Sub Plan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE): (a) and (b) Electricity is a concurrent subject. Supply and distribution of electricity at affordable rate to all the consumers including farmers, in a State/UT falls within the purview of the respective State Government/State Power Utility. The Government of India supplements the efforts of the State Governments through various measures for improvement in power sector and to provide electricity at affordable rates. The State Government can give subsidy to any class of consumers including SC and ST farmers, to the extent they consider appropriate as per provision of section 65 of the Electricity Act, 2003 as well clause 8.3 of the Tariff Policy. There is no specific provision to give subsidized power to SC and ST farmers by the Union Government.

Under the Special Central Assistance to Scheduled Castes Sub Plan Scheme, the proposal to increase the subsidy amount is incorporated in the Expenditure Finance Committee (EFC) Memorandum to be appraised by the Competent Authority.

(c) The Budget allocation under Special Central Assistance to Scheduled Castes Sub Plan (SCA to SCSP) during the financial year 2017-18 is ₹ 800.00 crore, out

of which, ₹ 488.74 crore has been released to States/UTs upto 31.12.2017 under SCA to SCSP.

#### **Indigenous launching of satellites**

2048. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the success of GSLV Mark-III has paved way for indigenously launching of our own communication satellites in the future without any foreign help;

(b) whether it would be a step ahead in the direction towards launching of satellites of other countries on commercial basis; and

(c) whether the funds generated through such commercial launches would help ISRO in funding and furthering its ongoing and future projects, if so, the details thereof and list of such projects?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SPACE (DR. JITENDRA SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir. The success of the first developmental flight of GSLV Mark III will enable indigenous launching up to 4 tonne class of communication satellites in the future.

(b) Yes, Sir. ISRO has been providing commercial launch services for earth observation satellites and small satellites onboard the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) through Antrix Corporation Limited since 1999. The successful launch of GSLV Mark III is a step ahead in building credibility in launching.

(c) ISRO has just completed one launch of GSLV-MK III. Next developmental launch is in first half of 2018. Some more launches of GSLV-MK III will be needed before GSLV MK III gets recognised internationally as a vehicle for transportation to space.

#### **Milestone achieved by space technology**

2049. SHRI A. VIJAYAKUMAR: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the number of milestone achieved by Indian space technology during recent years;

(b) whether there is any aim to achieve which is Internationally not achieved by the Indian Spacecraft;

(c) the status of Spacecraft for mars and whether it would reach at the schedule time to Mars; and