

can get embedded into an eco-system of incubation and start-ups as 'Value-addition Centres' in these institutions.

- (iii) Promotion of young researchers on the lines of Friedrich Miescher Institutes in Germany can work a long way in creation of melting pot of ideas and promote inter-disciplinary research and innovation.

(b) Yes Sir, the panel has also insisted that there is need to increase the investment in science and technology education in order to realise its ambition for becoming a global force in science.

(c) and (d) Intervention in the areas such as Artificial Intelligence and National Research Foundation (NRF) by PM-STIAC has helped facilitate induction of quality human resources in basic and applied research areas by way of provisioning internationally competitive incentive packages of remuneration and benefits.

Support to strengthen the field of science and technology

1749. LT. GEN. (DR.) D.P. VATS (RETD.):

DR. L. HANUMANTHAI AH:

SHRI P. BHATTACHARYA:

DR. AMEE YAJNIK:

SHRI RAJMANI PATEL:

Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is providing any financial/institutional support for both the invention as well as the innovation to strengthen the field of Science and Technology and encourage the new inventors/scientists in the country; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. HARSH VARDHAN):

(a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Department of Science and Technology (DST), Government of India is providing support to establish Technology Business Incubators (TBIs) primarily in and around academic, technical and management institutions to tap innovations and technologies for venture creation by utilizing expertise and infrastructure already available with the host institution. TBIs operate with an objective of promoting new technology/knowledge/innovation based startups by providing cost effective value added services like mentoring, financial, technical, accounting and intellectual property related services. The broad S&T sectors covered by these initiatives are Clean Energy,

Waste to Wealth, Affordable Healthcare, Electronics, Agri-implements, Manufacturing and any other technology or knowledge intensive area.

DST has launched a NIDHI programme (National Initiative for Developing and Harnessing Innovations) in which grants are provided to innovators and entrepreneurs through programmes for setting up of incubators, seed fund, accelerators and "Proof of concept". Further, PRAYAS (Promoting and Accelerating Young and Aspiring innovators and Startups) programme has been initiated in which established TBIs are supported with grant for 'Proof of Concept' and developing prototypes. A maximum grant of ₹ 220 lakh is provided to a TBI for establishing a PRAYAS Centre which includes ₹100 lakh for PRAYAS SHALA, ₹20 lakh for its operational cost and a maximum of ₹ 10 lakh to one innovator for developing prototype.

DST, through its National Innovation foundation (NIF) has institutionalised innovation 'by the grass root people' and extends it to support innovation 'for the grass root people'. NIF has almost 3 lakh innovations in its data base.

Innovation in Science Pursuit for Inspired Research (INSPIRE) scheme is one of the flagship programmes of DST. INSPIRE Awards -MANAK (Million Minds Augmenting National Aspirations and Knowledge) programme aims to motivate students in the age group of 10-15 years and studying in classes 6 to 10. The objective of the scheme is to target one million original ideas/innovations rooted in science and societal applications to foster a culture of creativity and innovative thinking among school children. Of the ten lakh ideas nominated, the best one lakh receive ₹ 10,000/- as INSPIRE award to make working prototypes and to showcase at district, state and national level science fairs.

DST is also supporting invention and innovation in the area of clean energy, water and air. A funding of ₹846.05 crores has been provided for a total of 419 projects over last 3 years. In addition, 7 exceptional clean energy innovators have been recognized for their commendable work to encourage them further.

Promoting Innovations in Individuals, Startups and MSMEs (PRISM) is a scheme launched by Department of Science and Industrial Research (DSIR) to support individual innovators with financial grants. Under this scheme, funds are directly provided to the innovators through outreach centres at incubators which play the role of a processing and monitoring agency. PRISM offers a maximum grant of ₹ 50 lakhs for developing prototypes under different categories.

NITI Aayog has established Atal Tinkering Labs (ATL) to inculcate innovative

thinking at school level and to promote design based approach for realising ideas. ATL is a workspace where young minds can give shape to their ideas through hands-on do-it-yourself mode and learn innovation skills. The vision is to cultivate one million children in India as Neoteric innovators.

Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), a flagship initiative of NITI Aayog, is supporting two programmes for setting up and scaling up of incubation centres to boost the innovative and entrepreneurial spirit in India. Atal Incubation Centres (AICs) scheme supports setting up of green field incubation centres that nurture innovative start-up businesses in their pursuit to become scalable and sustainable enterprises. Established Incubation Centre's (EICs) scheme provides scale-up support to well performing existing incubation centres, where AIM intends to further augment their performance by providing them scale-up support. In both of these schemes, AIM is providing grants of upto ₹ 10 crores over a period of 3-5 years.

Promotion of tourism in Assam and North East India

1750. SHRI KAMAKHYA PRASAD TASA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Assam and other North-Eastern States have many tourism destinations which require development and promotion, if so, the details thereof;

(b) the details of proposals received from the State of Assam for Central Financial Assistance (CFA) during current year along with the funds sanctioned, released and utilised, respectively during the period; and

(c) whether Government has received any proposal for CFA and the inclusion of Majuli Island and Kaziranga National Park in the India Tourism Circuit by promoting the eco-tourism ventures in Assam, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRI PRAHALAD SINGH PATEL): (a) to (c) The Ministry of Tourism is focussing on development and promotion of tourism in the North Eastern Region. For development Ministry under the Swadesh Drashan and PRASHAD Schemes have sanctioned 18 projects covering all the North Eastern States for ₹1456 crore.

The Ministry of Tourism undertakes various activities for the promotion of North Eastern region of the country as a tourist destination. These activities include: