GOVERNMENT OF INDIA MINISTRY OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY DEPARTMENT FOR PROMOTION OF INDUSTRY AND INTERNAL TRADE

LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 680. TO BE ANSWERED ON WEDNESDAY, THE 16TH SEPTEMBER, 2020.

NATIONAL SEED FUND

680. SHRI JAYADEV GALLA:

Will the Minister of **COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY** be pleased to state:

वाणिज्य एवं उद्योग मंत्री

- (a) the status of National Seed Fund proposed in the 2020-21 Budget;
- (b) the reasons that the country stands at 136th position on 'starting a business' parameter under Ease of Doing Business table;
- (c) the impact of COVID-19 on Startup India programme and the steps taken by the Government to address the said impact; and
- (d) the present status of Startup India Initiative started in 2016 and the number of employment opportunities that have been created by Startups so far?

ANSWER

वाणिज्य एवं उद्योग मंत्री (श्री पीयूष गोयल) THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY (SHRI PIYUSH GOYAL)

(a): An EFC note on Startup India Seed Fund Scheme, with a total proposed corpus of Rs. 945 Crore, has been formulated by the Department. The EFC note was circulated for Inter Ministerial consultations to the concerned Departments/Ministries. The comments/inputs received from the concerned Departments/Ministries are incorporated in the EFC Note on Startup India Seed Fund Scheme and EFC Note has been finalized.

Further, the grant of exception for the proposal of Startup India Seed Fund Scheme under clause 2(v) of DoE OM No. 42(02)PFC-I/2014 dated 04.06.2020 and the budgetary support for FY 2021-22 onwards has been solicited from Department of Expenditure.

(b): India's rank under 'Starting a Business' indicator has improved from 158 in the World Bank's Doing Business Report (DBR), 2015 (released in October, 2014) to 136 in DBR, 2020 (released in October, 2019). During the period, India's 'Distance to Frontier' score under 'Starting a Business' indicator has jumped from 68.42 to 81.6 indicating India's advancement towards the global best practices. The improvement in rank has occurred due to major reforms undertaken in a systematic manner over the last five years.

With an aim to make starting a business quicker and easier in line with global best practices, transformational reforms have been undertaken. One of the major reforms undertaken is the introduction of a new webform 'SPICe+ and AGILE-PRO' which integrates ten different services from three Central Ministries and one State Government. These services are – Name reservation, Company incorporation, registration of – PAN, TAN, DIN, EPFO, ESIC, GST & Profession Tax (Maharashtra); and opening of bank account. With this initiative, requirement of preparing and notarizing affidavit, and requirement of putting rubber stamp with company name have been eliminated. Registration under Shops & Establishments Act is also made completely online and is free of cost. Obtaining digital signature certificate has been made completely online, which can be obtained within a day.

- (c): The impact of COVID-19 on Startup India programme and the steps taken by the Government to address the said impact are at Annexure-I.
- (d): Since the launch of Startup India initiative on 16th January 2016, a total of 36,106 startups have been recognized by DPIIT in 586 districts, as on 6th September 2020. Major achievements under Startup India initiative are at Annexure-II.

A total number of 4,22,986 employment has been reported by 34,267 DPIIT Recognized startups as on 6th September 2020.

ANNEXURE REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (c) OF THE LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 680 FOR ANSWER ON 16.09.2020.

The global macroeconomic outlook for the current financial year 2020-21 has been adversely affected by COVID-19 pandemic which has impacted most countries in the world across continents. The pandemic has cast its shadow across various economic activities with dislocation in global production, supply chains and trade.

To address these adverse times, the Government of India has been preparing strategies and action plans not only for business continuity and sectoral revival but also to improve Ease of Doing Business in the country through various notifications/amendments/circulars highlighting measures to improve the business environment in India.

Regulatory measures have been taken by Central government, Reserve Bank of India, Securities & Exchange Board of India (SEBI), Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority (IRDAI) and the sectoral ministries to boost businesses in India. For entrepreneurs, certain measures in terms of tax, regulatory and RBI led monetary relief have been introduced.

39 such regulatory changes, to enhance ease of doing business, ease raising capital and reduce compliance burden have been undertaken. The list of regulatory reforms is enclosed at **Annexure –A.**

Other initiatives taken by the Government of India for Startups are:

- DPIIT had launched the United Against COVID-19- Innovation Challenge to identify innovative solutions to combat COVID-19. Applications were received for solutions to manage the over COVID situation including logistics solutions, testing solutions, Critical care equipment, large area sanitisation and various other critical aspects related to COVID-19.
- SIDBI has launched Covid-19 Startup Assistance Scheme (CSAS) for startups which aims to aid innovative startups that have demonstrated ability to adapt to economic impact from Covid-19 and ensured its employees safety and financial stability. SIDBI recognizes the operational and financial challenges being faced by startups and has been making efforts to provide financial assistance and stability to such startups through schemes like CSAS. Through this scheme, startups can receive a loan of up to Rs 2 crore.
- SIDBI has also announced a concessional interest rate of 5 percent for MSME loans under the SIDBI Assistance to Facilitate Emergency Response against Covid-19 (SAFE Scheme). These loans would be provided within 48 hours, with no collateral and minimum paperwork for MSMEs that are manufacturing products or delivering services related to the Covid-19 fight are eligible for these loans.
- Availability of additional financial window for healthcare sector under scheme called SIDBI Make in India Soft Loan Fund for Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (SMILE)) for financing the healthcare sector including hospitals, nursing home, clinics, etc. for their requirements related to fighting Corona Virus has also been launched.

ANNEXURE REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (d) OF THE LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 680 FOR ANSWER ON 16.09.2020.

Major achievements under Startup India Initiative

Startup India initiative was announced by Hon'ble Prime Minister of India on 15th August, 2015. The flagship initiative aims to build a strong eco-system for nurturing innovation and Startups in the country that will drive sustainable economic growth and generate large scale employment opportunities. Further to this, an Action Plan for Startup India was unveiled by Prime Minister of India on 16th January, 2016. The Action Plan comprises of 19 action items spanning across areas such as "Simplification and handholding", "Funding support and incentives" and "Industry-academia partnership and incubation".

Government of India has made fast paced efforts towards making the vision of Startup India initiative a reality. Substantial progress has been made under the Startup India initiative, which has stirred entrepreneurial spirit across the country.

The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) is mandated to coordinate implementation of Startup India initiative with other Government Departments. Apart from DPIIT, the initiatives under Startup India are driven primarily by five Government Departments viz. Department of Science and Technology (DST), Department of Bio-technology (DBT), Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), Ministry of Labour and Employment and Ministry of Corporate Affairs(MCA) and NITI Aayog.

Since the launch of initiative in January 2016, there has been a substantial progress under Startup India Action Plan. Many other initiatives beyond the Startup India Action Plan have been undertaken for development of overall growth of Startup movement in the country. Major achievements made so far under Startup India initiative are enumerated below.

1. Startup India Hub

A dedicated Startup Hub team was setup under Invest India. Team members have been assigned to different states for assisting them in formulating and implementing policies to facilitate growth of startups. A comprehensive portal has been set up to assist startups. 4,29,971 users registered on the Startup India Portal as of 13th September 2020. A total of 1,73003 queries, as on 11th September 2020, have been addressed through the Startup India portal and Startup India Twitter seva.

2. Recognition of Startups

- An online process has been institutionalized for recognition of Startups on the Startup India portal
- An entity is considered a Startup if:
 - Upto a period of ten years from the date of incorporation/ registration, if it is incorporated as a private limited company (as defined in the Companies Act, 2013) or registered as a partnership firm (registered under section 59 of the Partnership Act, 1932) or a

- limited liability partnership (under the Limited Liability Partnership Act, 2008) in India.
- Turnover of the entity for any of the financial years since incorporation/ registration has not exceeded one hundred crore rupees.
- Entity is working towards innovation, development or improvement of products or processes or services, or if it is a scalable business model with a high potential of employment generation or wealth creation.
- Provided that an entity formed by splitting up or reconstruction of an existing business shall not be considered a 'Startup'.
- As of 6th September 2020, 36,106 startups have been recognized by Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade(DPIIT) in 586 districts and 4,22,986 total employment has been reported by 34,267 startups

2.1 Compliance Regime based on Self Certification

Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change (MoEF&CC) has published a list of 36 white category industries. Startups falling under the "White category" would be able to self-certify compliance in respect of 3 Environment Acts –

- 1. The Water (Prevention & Control of Pollution)Act, 1974
- 2. The Water (Prevention & Control of Pollution) Gess (Amendment)Act, 2003
- 3. The Air (Prevention & Control of Pollution) Act, 1981.

Further, Ministry of Labour and Employment (MoLE) has issued guidelines to State Governments whereby Startups shall be allowed to self-certify compliance in respect of 6 labour laws. These are effective after concurrence of States/UTs. The Acts are:

- 1. The Building and Other Constructions Workers' (Regulation of Employment & Conditions of Service)Act, 1996
- 2. The Inter- State Migrant Workmen (Regulation of Employment & Conditions of Service) Act, 1979
- 3. The Payment of Gratuity Act, 1972
- 4. The Contract Labour (Regulation and Abo I ition) Act, 1970
- 5. The Employees' Provident Funds and Miscellaneous Provisions Act. 1952
- 6. The Employees' State Insurance Act, 1948.

27 states and UTs have implemented the process of self- certification to startups under 6 labour laws. 9 States (Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Uttarakhand, and Delhi) have integrated their portals with ShramSuvidha Portal. Overall, 169 DPIIT recognized Startups have availed the benefits of self-certification.

2.2 Easing Public Procurement

- The requirement of prior turnover and prior experience has been relaxed to encourage startups to participate in tenders. Further, startups have been exempted from the requirement of earnest money deposit
- 'GeM Startup Runway' has been launched for startups to sell products and services to Government. As of 24th April 2020, 5,263 DPIIT recognized startups have registered on Government e-Marketplace (GeM).

- 25,857 orders have been placed to startups. The value of orders served by startups is to the tune of about Rs.976 crore, as of 24th April 2020.
- Additionally, Startups can now register and participate in all public orders on Central Public Procurement Portal and get exemptions on prior experience, prior turnover and earnest money deposit requirements.
- GeM has relaxed the requirement of approved Trademark certificate for DPIIT Recognized Startups. An application for trademark will be sufficient.

2.3 Startup Intellectual Property Protection Scheme

- Startups are eligible for 80% rebate in patent filing fees and 50% on trademark filing fees. Additionally, Startups are also provided the facility of expedited examination of patent applications to reduce the time taken in granting patents.
- 510 patent facilitators and 392 trademark facilitators have been empanelled, as of June 2020, under this scheme to provide free-of-charge services to Startups.
- As of June 2020, 3618 patent applications have been granted 80% rebate on the filing fee . 6832 trademark applications have been granted a 50% rebate on filing fee.

2.4 Tax Exemption to Startups for 3 years

- The provisions of section 80-IAC of the Income Tax Act provide for a deduction of an amount equal to 100% of the profits and gains derived from an eligible business by an eligible start-up for 3 consecutive assessment years out of 7 years, at the option of the assessee, subject to certain conditions. The Finance Act, 2020 provides for an amendment to section 80-IAC of the Income Tax Act so as to provide that the deduction under the said section 80-IAC shall be available to an eligible start-up for a period of 3 consecutive assessment years out of 10 years beginning from the year in which it is incorporated. This amendment will take effect from 1st April 2021 and will, accordingly, apply in relation to the assessment year 2021-22 and subsequent assessment years.
- To avail these benefits, a Startup must get a Certificate of Eligibility from the Inter-Ministerial Board (IMB). 296 startups have been granted income tax exemptions till 45th IMB meeting.

2.5 Tax Exemption on Investments above Fair Market Value

DPIIT recognized startups are exempt from tax under Section 56(2)(viib) of the Income Tax Act when such a Startup receives any consideration for issue of shares which exceeds the Fair Market Value of such shares. The startup has to file a duly signed declaration in Form 2 to DPIIT (as per notification G.S.R. 127 (E)) to claim the exemption from the provisions of Section 56(2) (viib) of the Income Tax Act. As of 7th September 2020, with regard to declarations received from entities, furnished in Form 2, intimation regarding receipt of declaration in Form 2 has been mailed in the cases of 2930 entities.

2.6 Faster Exit for Startups

 Ministry of Corporate Affairs has notified Startups as "Fast track firms" enabling them to wind up operations within 90 days vis-a-vis 180 days for other companies

2.7 Fund of Funds for Startups

- Fund of Funds for Startups (FFS) with a total corpus of Rs 10,000 crore was established with contribution spread over the 14th and 15th Finance Commission cycle based on progress of implementation. Startup Fund of Funds is operational and is managed by SIDBI.
- As of 7th September 2020, an amount Rs.1322.0544 cr stands released to SIDBI, out of which Rs.500cr was released in 2015-16; Rs.100 cr was released in 2016-17; Rs.431.3044 cr released in 2019-20 and Rs.290.75 cr was released in 2020-21. Rs.1054.97 cr was provisioned under FFS for 2020-21.
- As of 7th September 2020, SIDBI has committed Rs. 4016.95 Cr to 56 SEBI registered Alternative Investment Funds (AIFs). These funds have raised a corpus fund of Rs. 30,303 Cr. Rs. 1183.86 Cr. have been drawn from the FFS and Rs. 4035.71 Cr. have been invested into 361 startups.

3. Participation of States in Strengthening Startup Ecosystems

DPIIT is engaging intensively with the State Governments to develop strong Startup ecosystems across the country.

State/UT Startup Ranking Framework was launched on 6th February 2018. The key objective of the Startup States Ranking Framework 2018 (SRF- 2018) was to encourage States and UTs to take proactive steps towards strengthening the Startup ecosystem within their jurisdiction. There were 38 action points categorized into 7 broad areas such as Startup Policy and Implementation, Incubation support, Seed Funding, Angel and Venture Funding, Simplification of Regulations, Easing Public Procurement and Awareness & Outreach. The ranking methodology aimed to create a healthy competition among States to further learn, share and adopt best practices. A compendium of good practices was also launched, listing 95 good practices implemented by various State Governments. Knowledge Workshops were held to assist States in formulating policies and executing appropriate programs. Visits to USA and Israeli ecosystems were facilitated for State Government representatives to enable the transfer of information and knowledge from the best ecosystems of the world. The final rankings of SRF 2018 were announced on 20th December, 2018 and the States were felicitated by DPIIT. 27 States and 3 Union Territories participated in the exhaustive ranking exercise.

As a result of SRF 2018, new Startup policies were launched, necessary amendments were made, new Government orders were issued and many Startups were supported .Some of the major impacts of the ranking exercise include Implementation of Startup Policies in 25 States, Seed Funding to 3213 Startups; Funding of 163 Startups through Venture Funds; 17 States announcing incentives for women entrepreneurs; Incubation area of 10.2 lakh Sq.ft supported by State Governments; Establishment of 596 Entrepreneurship Cells across 340 districts; Registration of 1996 mentors across 19 States and organization of 233 Startup events across 21 States.

The Department has launched States' Startup Ranking Framework for 2019 with the key objective to encourage States and UTs to take proactive steps towards strengthening the Startup ecosystems within their jurisdictions. To establish uniformity and ensure standardization in the ranking process, States and UTs have been divided into Category-X and Category-Y, wherein the Y category

entails all UTs, except Delhi, and all states in North East India, except Assam; Category X contains all other states.

State Ranking Framework 2019 is spread across 7 areas of intervention with a total of 30 action points, as compared to the 38 action points in the Previous Year State Ranking Framework. The framework aimed to evaluate States/UTs in a balanced and transparent manner and has thus made documentary evidence of compliance on action points by the State/UT Government a pre- requisite for collection of feedback. The consideration period (the period in which compliance on action points will be considered for the evaluation process) for the 2019 ranking exercise is made from 1st May 2018 to 30th September 2019.

As a part of capacity development of the state governments, 3(three) two-day knowledge exchange workshops were organized in Jaipur, Mumbai, and Kochi. Video conferences were also conducted to help the states and UTs in resolving their queries. A delegation of government officials of more than 15 states was a part of International Exposure Visits conducted in USA and Germany to understand and learn key Startup initiatives in these successful Startup nations.

This was followed by evaluation of documentary evidence by the states by an Evaluation Committee, which constituted a mix of experts from private and government organisations. A parallel exercise of feedback collection was conducted by an external agency appointed by DPIIT. The beneficiary data provided by States was collated across each applicable action point. A total of 25 States/UTs participated in this exercise and more than 60,000 calls have been made. Feedback was collected from more than 6500 beneficiaries in more than eleven languages.

Today, 29 state and UTs have their own startup policies. Various states have been working diligently towards strengthening their startup ecosystems, by providing strong institutional and regulatory support to startups, easing public procurement norms, setting-up incubators, providing funding opportunities to startups, and organising various awareness and outreach events on both national and international level.

All the exercises under State Ranking Framework 2019 are now complete and the results have been finalized.

Results of SRF 2019 Category X

State	Category
Gujarat	Best Performer
Karnataka	Top Performers
Kerala	
Bihar	Leaders
Maharashtra	
Odisha	
Rajasthan	
Haryana	Aspiring Leaders
Jharkhand	
Punjab	
Telangana	
Uttarakhand	

Andhra Pradesh	
Assam	
Chhattisgarh	
Delhi	Emerging Startup
Himachal Pradesh	Ecosystem
Madhya Pradesh	
Tamil Nadu	
Uttar Pradesh	

State/ UT	Category
Andaman and Nicobar Islands	Best Performer
Chandigarh	Leader
Nagaland	Aspiring Leader
Mizoram	Emerging Startup Ecosystem
Sikkim	

Category Y

Note:

- The results are in alphabetical order within each category.
- Category X comprises of all states and UTs except Category Y
- Category Y comprises of all North Eastern states except Assam and all UTs except Delhi

4. Startup India Yatra

DPIIT has also made efforts to engage with the Startup ecosystem through extensive outreach via bootcamps, social media, print and digital platforms. The Startup India Yatra is an initiative that travels to Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities of India to search for entrepreneurial talent and help develop Startup ecosystem. Day long bootcamps were conducted which included awareness workshops, idea validation and pitching sessions. Startup Yatra has been conducted across 23 States in 207 districts impacting 78346 aspiring entrepreneurs. A total of 1,424 incubation offers have been given to the startups as a result of this initiative.

5. Capacity Development Program for Women Entrepreneurs (WING- Women Rise Together)

Startup India has launched a training program for aspiring and existing women entrepreneurs - WING across the country. This will focus on conducting workshops, providing mentorship support and an opportunity to present their startups/ideas to stakeholders of the startup ecosystem. The workshops will provide training on the following topics:

- Legal and Compliance
- o IP and Patent Protection
- Financial Management
- Marketing Prowess

These are 2-day workshops providing domain specific knowledge and one-on-mentorship after every session. 17 workshops have been conducted across Kerala, Telangana, Karnataka, Punjab, Assam, Nagaland, Odisha and Rajasthan till February 2020. 68 incubation offers, 55 mentor connects, Resource Partner incentives to 110 participants have been offered. The aim is

to conduct about 140 workshops across the country and train about 7000 women.

6. Grand Challenges

DPIIT has engaged with various Government Departments and assisted them in launching Startup challenges in various sectors and domains.

- DPIIT launched the Ease of Doing Business (EoDB) Grand Challenge inviting innovative ideas from individuals, startups or other enterprises to implement Artificial Intelligence (AI), Big Data Analytics, Internet of Things (IoT), Blockchain and other cutting-edge technologies, for re-engineering related Government processes.789 startups applications were received through Startup India website were screened and winners have been announced for problem statements.
- Under the Swachh Bharat Grand Challenge, Startup India worked with Ministry of Water and Sanitation to recognise Startups spearheading novel innovations in the field of waste management, water management, air quality management and sanitation. The initiative has helped the Ministry to identify relevant solutions for environmental challenges. Two startups under each sector, have been awarded cash grants.
- DPIIT in collaboration with Ministry of Agriculture has launched an Agriculture Grand Challenge inviting solutions on 12 problem statements. Winners of the challenge have received mentorship, free of cost incubation for a period of 3 months, opportunities to conduct pilot programs and funding support in the form of grants.
- DPIIT in collaboration with Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), has launched Startup India CRPF Grand Challenge challenge to address critical issues hampering growth of the security sector in the country by leveraging technical expertise and best fundamental concepts thus helping talented and creative innovators to pursue promising avenues at the frontier of technology. Demo day was organized to validate the products of 16 startups. Rs 2 lakhs for winner (one winner per problem statement) to be disbursed and product trial opportunities with CRPF to be provided to the startups.
- DPIIT in collaboration with Ayushman NHA launched the Ayushman Bharat PMJAY Startup Grand Challenge to generate cutting-edge solutions for supporting the National Health Authority towards more effective implementation of Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY) and empowering 500 million people to gain access to affordable healthcare. Cash price of Rs 2 lakhs for winners per problem statement to be disbursed along with mentorship and facilitation for funding and procurement including opportunities for testing and validation.
- Startup India launched Single Use Plastic Grand Challenge to incentivize innovators and Startups to develop design solutions across three problem statements. Through this challenge, first winners for each problem statement (3 startups) received cash price of INR 3 lakhs and second winners for each problem statement (3 startups) received cash price of INR 2 lakhs
- The Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying, in partnership with Startup India, launched the 'Animal Husbandry Startup Grand Challenge', to scout for innovative and commercially viable solutions to address the problems faced by the animal husbandry and dairy sector. The challenge was launched by Hon'ble Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, on 11th September 2019 at a national animal disease control programme in Mathura. The challenge was open for application to startups from 11th

September 2019 to 30th October 2019, on the Startup India portal – www.startupindia.gov.in. 157 applications were received in total for the six problem statements that were identified as below:

- Value added products
- Single use plastic alternatives
- Eliminate milk adulteration
- E-commerce solutions
- Product traceability
- Breed improvement and animal nutrition

The Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying (DAHD) provided innovative startups with solutions to the above-mentioned problem statements with the following:

- Cash Grants: Two winners under each problem statement to be awarded with cash grants worth
 - INR 10 Lakh (Winner)
 - INR 7 Lakh (Runner-up)
- Incubation to 10 startups
- Mentorship: Virtual masterclass for each problem statement organized for startups to provide mentorship and guidance
- Ministry of Textiles along with Startup India launched a Grand challenge for startups in January 2020. The theme targets the single use plastic bag alternative and incentivizes innovators and Startups to develop design solutions. The solutions must also have the same or greater functionality as the products they are designed to replace and must be designed with current production methods in mind. Under various problem statements, the challenge aims to identify and shortlist innovative enterprise stage Startups and provide them with the cash rewards. The challenge is split in 2 problem statements
- Single Use plastic alternative
- Multi Use plastic alternative

Apart from channelizing resources from the Government, Market opportunities and mentorship have been provided by way of organizing Corporate Grand Challenges in partnership with Softbank, Whatsapp, Western Digital, International Accelerator etc.

7. International Bilateral Cooperation

One of the key objectives under the Startup India program is to help connect Indian Startup ecosystems to global Startup ecosystems through various engagement models. Startup India has launched Bridges with **10 countries** in order to provide a soft-landing platform to startups from the partner nations and to promote investments.

Key international partnerships have been executed by Startup India and their benefits are described below.

7.1 India Israel Innovation challenge

Objective: To promote exchange of technology and best practices between startup ecosystems in India and Israel.

The innovation challenge was launched by the Hon'ble Prime Ministers of India and Israel in July 2017, calling on Israeli and Indian startups to develop solutions for critical problems in the field of agriculture, water and healthcare.

Outcome: The challenge was hosted online and received 665 applications (Healthcare: 311, Agri-tech: 217, Water-tech: 137) from Indian innovators and startups. 18 Startups were selected from the challenge and were awarded, as per following:

- 6 Indian winners were granted Rs. 5 lakhs each and 6 months free of cost incubation at T-Hub, Hyderabad (Healthcare) and iCreate, Gujarat (Agri-tech, Water-tech)
- 12 Indian winners were given grant of Rs. 2 lakhs each

7.2 India Portugal Startup Hub (IPSH)

Objective: To strengthen and foster the connection between the startup ecosystem of India and Portugal

The India Portugal Startup Hub was launched by Prime Minister Antonia Costa and his Indian counterpart, Prime Minister Narenda Modi, in June 2017. Earlier in 2017, the Portuguese Government announced the 'Startup Visa' program during the India – Portugal Summit. The 'Startup Visa' program is a visa facilitation program for Indian entrepreneurs, aimed at those who want to launch their startups in Portugal.

7.3 India Sweden Startup Sambandh

Objective: To deepen engagement among stakeholders of the startup ecosystems of India and Sweden.

India Sweden Startup Sambandh was launched at Stockholm from October 12-13, 2017 and provides guidance to Startups from both the countries for sustainable growth of their businesses.

7.4 India Singapore Entrepreneurship Bridge

Objective: To enable Startups, investors and aspiring entrepreneurs of India and Singapore to connect with one another with a focus on:

- Knowledge exchange
- Networking opportunities
- Capacity building

The India-Singapore Entrepreneurship Bridge (In Spreneur) was launched on 7th January, 2018 at the ASEAN – India Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Conference by the then Hon'ble External Affairs Minister of India, Late Smt. Sushma Swaraj.

The first initiative in this engagement was the ASEAN India Grand Challenge that aimed to support ASEAN startups with a commercially viable solution that can solve India's priority sectors through a market access program in 5 States of India. The themes for the challenge are as follows:

- IoT for smart cities
- Financial technology & financial inclusion
- Renewable energy
- Agriculture & rural development
- Digital health & Clean India

7.5 Indo-Dutch #StartUpLink

Objective: To promote exchange of technology and best practices between Startup ecosystems in India and Netherlands.

The Indo-Dutch Startup Link acts as a one-stop platform for Startups from India and Netherlands. The initiative helps enable Startups, investors, incubators and aspiring entrepreneurs of both countries to connect with one another, facilitate knowledge exchange, and provide pilot opportunities for Startups. Hon'ble Minister for Foreign Trade & Development Cooperation, Netherlands, Ms. Sigrid Kaag along with Mayor of Bangalore, Sampath Raj launched the Indo-Dutch StartUp Link portal on May, 2018.

Startup India Hub and Netherlands Enterprise Agency partnered for their respective countries. The initiative helps startups through their lifecycle with specific focus on aspects like funding, market expansion, feasibility testing, business structuring advisory, enhancement of marketing skills, and technology commercialization.

7.6 Japan India Startup Hub

Objective: To promote exchange of technology and best-practices between startup ecosystems in India and Japan

The Japan India Startup Hub was launched in 29th October, 2018 by the Hon'ble Prime Ministers of India. AnMoU was signed between Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry of Japan, and Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India. The innovation challenge was launched under Japan India Startup Hub.

Outcome:

The challenge was hosted and invited applications from Indian startups in fields of artificial intelligence, machine learning, face recognition, and cyber security. 422 applications were received and out of which one startup was awarded the cash grant of USD 50,000.

7.7 India Finland Tech Hub

Objective: To promote exchange of technology and best-practices between Startup Ecosystems in India and Finland.

The India Finland Tech Hub was launched in December 2018 at Slush 2018 by the Ambassador of India in Finland. The India – Finland Tech Hub aims to act as a gateway for Indian startups looking to expand to Finland and vice versa and facilitate entry and innovation exchange between the two countries.

7.8 India Korea Startup Hub

Objective:

To promote exchange of technology and best-practices between startup ecosystems in India and Korea.

The Hon'ble Prime Ministers of India and Korea launched the India – Korea Startup Hub in Seoul on 21st February 2019. The Hub was conceptualized as part of a joint statement signed between the Ministry of Commerce and Industry of the Republic of India and Ministry of SMEs and Startups of The Republic of Korea to enable collaborations between startups, investors, incubators, and aspiring entrepreneurs of both countries and provide them requisite resources for market entry and global expansion. Two challenges were launched as a part of the India-Korea Startup Hub.

Outcome:

The challenge was hosted online and received 130 applications (Credit Rating – 56 Startups; Predictive Analytics- 21 Startups; Fraud Detection- 28 Startups; Cyber Security- 25 Startups) from Indian innovators and startups. Three startups were selected as the winners and were awarded a cash prize worth USD 25,000, USD 15,000 and USD 10,000 along with a pilot opportunity.

The second challenge was hosted online and received 190 applications (Preventive Care - 59 Startups; Integrated Business Model- 55 Startups; Primary Care- 44 Startups; Secondary/Tertiary Care- 24 Startups; Enablers- 8 Startups). One Startup was selected as the winner and was awarded USD 10,000 as the prize money.

7.9 Indo-Russia Innovation Bridge

Objective:

To promote exchange of technology and best-practices between Startup Ecosystems in India and Russia.

The Indo-Russia Innovation Bridge aims to enable startups, investors, incubators, and aspiring entrepreneurs of both countries to connect with each other. Two challenges were launched.

Outcome:

The first challenge was hosted online and received 256 applications in fields including Fintech, HR Tech, Internet of Things, B2C Digital Products, Soft / SaaS for E-commerce. 4 startups out of these received travel grant up to Rs. 216,400 for 2 months free acceleration along with a paid pilot opportunity in Moscow.

The second challenge invited tech-enabled innovative solutions from both Indian & Russian startups in the Education sector. 218 applications were received, out of which 10 startups have been shortlisted for the final pitching round. The winning startup was awarded cash prize of USD 25,000

7.10 UK-India Startup Launchpad

Objective:

To promote exchange of technology and best practices between

Startup ecosystems in India and UK.

Outcome:

UK - India Startup Launchpadwas launched by DPIIT and DFID on

19th September 2019 at the TechXchange 2019.

8. Organizing Startup Fests for Showcasing Innovation and Providing a Collaboration Platform

- India has proposed to form the Special Working Group (SWG) on Startups and Innovation this year, chaired by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India. DPIIT also envisions to launch and organize the SCO Startup Forum in October 2020. The Startup Forum shall aim to promote startups and improve the startup ecosystems in the SCO Member States. The heads of states from all the 8 member nations in the SCO shall meet in November 2020 and may officially announce the SWG on Startups and Innovation.
- The Department has organized various Startup events. Some of such key events are as follows:
 - I. Roundtable headed by Minister of Commerce and Industry with Venture Fund managers in April 2018 at Mumbai;
 - II. Roundtable with Singapore delegation led by Enterprise Singapore & TiE Singapore in August 2018 at Delhi;
 - III. Roundtable with Japanese startups led by JETRO in September 2018 at Delhi;
 - IV. Roundtable headed by Secretary DPIIT with Venture Fund managers in August 2018 at Delhi;
 - V. Roundtable with Finance Secretary on banking regulations faced by startups in September 2018 at Delhi;
 - VI. Startup India Global Venture Capital Summit in December 2018 at Goa:
 - VII. Roundtable headed by Secretary DPIIT on Angel Tax regulations in February 2019 at Delhi;
 - VIII. Startup Manthan @ Aero India in February 2019 at Bengaluru;
 - IX. Speed Mentoring Session for Women Entrepreneurs in March 2019 at Delhi;
 - X. Roundtable headed by Secretary, DPIIT on Accreditation of investors in April 2019 at Delhi;
 - XI. Roundtable headed by Secretary DPIIT on Regulatory issues faced by stakeholders of startup ecosystem April 2019 at Delhi;
 - XII. Roundtable with Central Government Departments on best practices for promoting startups in May 2019 at Delhi
 - XIII. Roundtable headed by Secretary, DPIIT on journey and hurdles faced by Startups in November 2019 at Delhi
 - XIV. Second edition of Startup India Global Venture Capital Summit in December 2019 at Goa;
 - XV. Roundtable headed by Minister of Commerce and Industry to discuss regulatory concerns of investors in December 2019 at Goa
 - XVI. Roundtable headed by Secretary DPIIT on Regulatory issues pertaining to Startups held in January 2020 at Delhi;
 - XVII. Roundtable headed by Secretary DPIIT on mobilization of surplus funds available with pension, insurance and PSUs for investment into Startups in January 2020 at Delhi.
 - XVIII. Roundtable headed by Chairman Airport Authority of India on mobilization of surplus funds available with PSUs for investment into Startups in February 2020 at Delhi.
 - XIX. Roundtable headed by Secretary Ministry of Labour and Employmenton mobilization of surplus funds available with pension fund for investment into Startups in February 2020 at Delhi.

- XX. Roundtable headed by Secretary DPIIT on action taken report on regulatory concerns of Investors and other stakeholders of the Startup Ecosystem in February 2020 at Delhi.
- XXI. Roundtable headed by Joint Secretary DPIIT taxation concerns of the startup stakeholder community in March 2020 at Delhi.
- XXII. Videoconference headed by Minister of Railways and Commerce & Industry to assess the impact of COVID-19 and lockdown in the country on Startup ecosystem. in April 2020.
- XXIII. Videoconference headed by Joint Secretary DPIIT on taxation concerns of the startup stakeholder community in May 2020.
- XXIV. Videoconference headed by Joint Secretary DPIIT on mobilisation of Surplus fund available with Insurance Companies for investment into Startups through Alternative Investment Fund (AIF) in June 2020.
- XXV. Videoconference headed by Joint Secretary DPIIT to discuss the possibility of mobilization of surplus funds available with insurance companies for investment into startups through Alternative Investment Fund (AIF) in August 2020.

9. Regulatory Reforms

Recognizing that disruptive business models and innovative technologies may face regulatory hurdles, DPIIT has held extensive consultations with all the stakeholders and has worked with relevant Government Agencies to make regulatory changes. 39 such regulatory changes, to enhance ease of doing business, ease of raising capital and reduce compliance burden have been undertaken. The list of regulatory reforms is enclosed at Annexure –A

10. National Startup Awards

National Startup Awards (NSA) is an initiative of the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade to recognize and reward outstanding startups and ecosystem enablers that are building innovative products or solutions and scalable enterprises, with high potential of employment generation or wealth creation, demonstrating measurable social impact. The measure of success will not only be the financial gains for the investors but also the contribution to the social good.

The journey of conceptualizing National startup Awards started in 2019, with 3 key considerations:

- Identification of categories which would represent the spread of sectors in which startups/ entrepreneurs are thriving
- Identification of parameters against which the startups would be evaluated
- Creation of a robust evaluation methodology which evaluates startups on the basis of innovation, scalability/ business growth and contribution to society, economic & environment.
 - On the basis of the above-mentioned criteria, National Startup Awards 2020 have recognized exceptional startups across various categories that are:
- Providing innovative solutions to solve real problems and challenges for India
- Developing innovative technologies, products and solutions from India into the world
- Building businesses that are scalable, sustainable and responsible
- Delivering measurable developmental gains

The applications for the 'National Startup Awards 2020' were hosted on the Startup India portal – www.startupindia.gov.in – through which a total of 1,641 Startups and 41 ecosystem enablers (incubators and accelerators) participated in the first edition of the National Startup Awards.

A 4-stage evaluation process was followed for the applications received. The applications were pre-screened by the Startup India Team for DPIIT-recognition and other legal documentation, followed by second round of evaluation and due diligence by a third-party knowledge partner for the program. The shortlisted startups are given an opportunity to present their ideas to an expert jury panel with public & private sector stalwarts, over video conferencing.

A total of 15 panels were organized on 4 weekends to come up with winners and runner-up's for NSA 2020

- 197 startups, 9 incubators and 5 accelerators presented their pitches infront of the jury
- Each panel comprised of industry leaders from their respective sectors, startup ecosystem experts, sector experts from the Govt.

The winning startups will get cash prizes along with opportunities to present their solutions to relevant public authorities and corporates, for potential pilot projects and work orders. The awards will also recognize leading accelerators and incubators across the country.

Regulatory Reforms For Enabling Small Businesses or Startups (Since January, 2016)

Reserve Bank of India

- 1. Startup enterprises permitted to access loans under External Commercial Borrowing Framework up to USD 3 million.(Oct, 2016)
- 2. A Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) registered Foreign Venture Capital Investor (FVCI) may contribute up to 100% of the capital of an Indian company engaged in any activity mentioned in Schedule 6 of Notification No. FEMA 20/2000, including startups irrespective of the sector in which it is engaged, under the automatic route. (Aug, 2017)
- 3. An Indian startup having an overseas subsidiary, may open a foreign currency account with a bank outside India for the purpose of crediting to it foreign exchange earnings out of exports/ sales made by the said entity and/ or the receivables, arising out of exports/ sales, of its overseas subsidiary. (June, 2016)
- 4. SOFTEX form filed by software exporters moved online. (Feb, 2019)

Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)

- 5.Lock in period for investments made by an Angel Fund reduced to 1 year from 3 years as amended by the SEBI (Alternative Investment Funds) (Amendment) Regulations, 2016, w.e.f. 04-01-2017.
- 6.Angel Funds are allowed to invest in overseas venture capital undertakings upto 25% of their investible corpus in line with other AIFs as provided by the SEBI (Alternative Investment Funds) (Amendment) Regulations, 2016, w.e.f. 04-01-2017.
- 7.The upper limit for number of angel investors in a scheme is increased from forty nine to two hundred as amended by SEBI (Alternative Investment Funds) (Amendment) Regulations, 2016, w.e.f. 04-01-2017
- 8.The requirements of minimum investment amount by an Angel Fund in any venture capital undertaking is reduced from fifty lakhs to twenty five lakhs as amended by SEBI (Alternative Investment Funds) (Amendment) Regulations, 2016,w.e.f. 04-01-2017
- 9. "Operating Guidelines for Alternative Investment Funds in International Financial Services Centres" issued by SEBI. (Nov, 2018)

Ministry of Corporate Affairs

- 10. The financial statement, with respect to private company (if such private company is a start-up) may not include the cash flow statement. (June, 2017)
- 11.A private company, which is considered as a start-up for a period of five years from the date of its incorporation, is also allowed to accept deposits from members without any restriction on the amount. (Sep. 2017)
- 12. Startup defined for the purpose of Companies Act, 2013: As per the definition, a start-up company means a private company incorporated under the Companies Act,

- 2013 and recognised as a "start-up" in accordance with the notification issued by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade. (June, 2017)
- 13.Exemption from procedural compliance (e.g. such as issue of an offer circular or creation of a deposit repayment reserve) for raising deposits from shareholders. (June, 2017)
- 14.In relation to a private company (if such private company is a startup), the annual return shall be signed by the Company Secretary, or where there is no Company Secretary, by the Director of the company. (June, 2017)
- 15.A private company (if such private company is a startup) is required to conduct at least one meeting of the Board of Directors in each half of a calendar year and the gap between the two meetings is not less than ninety days. (June, 2017)
- 16.Name Reservation for Company incorporation: Rule 8, Companies (Incorporation) Rules, 2014 substituted with Companies (Incorporation) 5th Amendment Rules, 2019, which provides for new regulations on resemblance with an existing company name, new categories of undesirable names of a company and list of words which can be used only after obtaining approval. (May, 2019)
- 17.Amendment in Companies (Share Capital and Debentures) Rules, 2014: The Ministry of Corporate Affairs issued a notification on 16th August, 2019 increasing the period in which ESOPs could be granted to promoters and directors (holding more than 10% equity) of Startups, from 5 years to 10 years from the date of incorporation and thereby aligned the provisions of the Companies (Share Capital and Debentures) Rules with the provisions referred to in the DPIIT notification dated 19th Feb, 2019.

The notification also enhanced the limit on shares with Differential Voting Rights in the Company from 26% of the total post-issue paid up equity capital of the Company to 74% of the total voting power. Further, the condition for the company to have consistent track record of distributable profits for the last three years for issue of DVR shares has been removed. (August 2019)

- 18.Corporate Social Responsibility Funds: In reference to section 135 of the Companies Act 2013, Schedule VII has been amended to include Contribution to incubators funded by Central Government or State Government or any agency or Public Sector Undertaking of Central Government or State Government, and contributions to public funded Universities, Indian Institute of Technology (IITs), National Laboratories and Autonomous Bodies (established under the auspices of Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), Department of Atomic Energy (DAE), Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), Department of Science and Technology (DST), Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology) engaged in conducting research in science, technology, engineering and medicine aimed at promoting Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). (October 2019).
- 19.As part of Government of India's Ease of Doing Business (EODB) initiatives, the Ministry of Corporate Affairs has launched a new integrated Web Form christened 'SPICe+' replacing the existing SPICe form. SPICe+ would offer 10 services by 3 Central Govt Ministries & Departments (Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Ministry of Labour & Department of Revenue in the Ministry of Finance) and One State Government(Maharashtra), thereby saving as many procedures, time and cost for Starting a Business in India and would be applicable for all new company incorporations w.e.f.23rd February 2020. SPICe+ has two parts: Part A-for Name

reservation for new companies and Part B offering a bouquet of services viz. (i) Incorporation (ii) DIN allotment (iii) Mandatory issue of PAN (iv) Mandatory issue of TAN (v) Mandatory issue of EPFO registration (vi) Mandatory issue of ESIC registration (vii) Mandatory issue of Profession Tax registration(Maharashtra) (viii) Mandatory Opening of Bank Account for the Company and (ix) Allotment of GSTIN (if so applied for) (February 2020)

- 20.Amendment in Companies (Share Capital and Debentures) Rules, 2014: The Ministry of Corporate Affairs issued a notification on 05th June, 2020 increasing the period in which Sweat Equity shares, from 5 years to 10 years from the date of incorporation and thereby aligned the provisions of the Companies (Share Capital and Debentures) Rules with the provisions referred to in the DPIIT notification dated 19th Feb, 2019. (June 2020)
- 21.Amendment in Companies (Acceptance of Deposits) Rules, 2014: The Ministry of Corporate Affairs issued a notification on 07th September, 2020 increasing the period of issuance of convertible note, from 5 years to 10 years from the date of issue and thereby aligned the provisions of the Companies (Acceptance of Deposits) Rules, 2014 with the provisions referred to in the DPIIT notification dated 19th Feb, 2019. (September 2020)
- 22. Amendment in Companies (Acceptance of Deposits) Rules, 2014: The Ministry of Corporate Affairs issued a notification on 07th September, 2020 whereby the maximum limit in respect of deposits to be accepted from members by a private company shall not apply to a start-up company for 10 years from the date of its incorporation, instead of 5 years. (September 2020)

Ministry of Finance, Department of Revenue

- 23.In the case of a domestic company, where its total turnover or the gross receipt in the previous year does not exceed two hundred and fifty crore rupees, income tax shall be charged at the rate of 25 percent of the total income. (Feb, 2018)
- 24. Definition of eligible business as stated in Section 80-IAC aligned with Startups definition. (April, 2018)
- 25.Introduction of Section 54EE in the Income Tax Act, 1961: Exemption from tax on long-term capital gain if such long-term capital gain is invested in a fund notified by Central Government. The maximum amount that can be invested is Rs 50 lakh. (May, 2016)
- 26.Amendment in Section 54GB of Income Tax Act: Exemption from tax on capital gains arising out of sale of residential house or a residential plot of land if the amount of net consideration is invested in prescribed stake of equity shares of eligible Startup for utilizing the same for purchase of specified asset. (Feb, 2016)
- 27. Minimum Alternate Tax credit allowed to be carried forward up to fifteenth assessment years instead of ten assessment years. (2017)
- 28.Exemption under section 80-IAC of Income Tax Act: Exemption to eligible Startup for any 3 consecutive assessment years out of 7 years (earlier 5 years) beginning from the year in which such eligible Startup is incorporated.(April, 2018)
- 29.Exemption from tax under the provisions of section 56(2)(viib) to Startups for issue of shares above fair market value on the basis of a self-declaration to the Central Board of Direct Taxes. The aggregate amount of paid up share capital and

share premium of the startup after issue or proposed issue should not exceed Rs. 25 Crore (Feb, 2019)

- 30. Taxation of convertible notes Period for which a bond, debenture, debenturestock or deposit certificate was held prior to conversion shall be considered for determining the period of holding of such shares or debentures acquired upon conversion. (March, 2016)
- 31.Amendment in Section 54GB of Income Tax Act w.e.f 1st April 2020: (August 2019)
- i.The condition of minimum holding of 50% of share capital or voting rights in the start-up relaxed to 25%
- ii.Extension of period under which benefit under section 54GB from for sale of residential property can be availed up to 31st March, 2021
- iii.Condition restricting transfer of new asset being computer or computer software is to relaxed from 5 years to 3 years w.e.f. 1-4-2020
- 32. Amendment in Section 79 of Income Tax Act (August 2019): Eligible Startups to carry forward their losses on satisfaction of any one of the two conditions:
- i.Continuity of 51% shareholding/voting power or
- ii.Continuity of 100% of original shareholders carrying voting power
- 33. Pass through of losses allowed to Investment Funds i.e. Category I and II AIF similar to pass through of income. These amendments will take effect from the 1st April, 2020 and will, accordingly, apply in relation to the assessment year 2020-21 and subsequent assessment years (August 2019)
- 34. The investment made by Venture Capital Fund of Category-I AIF in a startup was exempted from the applicability of the provisions of section 56(2)(viib) of the IT Act. This exemption has been extended to all sub-categories of Category-I AIF and Category-II AIF via introduction of "specified funds" in the said section (August 2019)
- 35.The Finance Act 2020 provides for amendment in section 80-IAC of the Incometax Act relating to special provision in respect of specified business. The provisions of section 80-IAC, inter alia, provide for a deduction of an amount equal to hundred per cent. of the profits and gains derived from an eligible business by an eligible start-up for three consecutive assessment years out of ten years vis-à-vis the earlier norm of seven years at the option of the assessee and the total turnover of its business does not exceed hundred crore rupees in the previous year relevant to the assessment year for which deduction under this section is claimed. This amendment will take effect from 1st April, 2021 and will, accordingly, apply in relation to the assessment year 2021-2022 and subsequent assessment years. (Feb 2020)
- 36.The Finance Act 2020 provides for amendment in section 80-IAC of the Incometax Act relating to special provision in respect of specified business. The provisions of section 80-IAC, inter alia, provide for a deduction of an amount equal to hundred per cent. of the profits and gains derived from an eligible business by an eligible start-up for three consecutive assessment years out of ten years at the option of the assessee and the total turnover of its business does not exceed hundred crore rupees vis-à-vis the earlier norm of twenty-five crore rupees in the previous year relevant to the assessment year for which deduction under this section is claimed. This amendment will take effect from 1st April, 2021 and will, accordingly, apply in relation to the assessment year 2021-2022 and subsequent assessment years. (Feb 2020)

37.The Finance Act 2020 provides for amendment in sections 156, 191 and 192 of the Income Tax Act laying to enable employees receiving specified security or sweat equity share as perquisite under section 17(2)(vi) of an eligible startup referred to in section 80-IAC, to deduct or pay, as the case may be, tax on such income within fourteen days after the expiry of forty-eight months from the end of the relevant assessment year; or from the date of the sale of such specified security or sweat equity share by the assessee; or from the date of the assessee ceasing to be the employee of the person, whichever is earlier, on the basis of rates in force of the financial year in which the said specified security or sweat equity share is allotted or transferred. This amendment will take effect from 1st April, 2020. As per the earlier norms, the said perquisite including ESOPs were taxed in the hands of the employee at the time of exercise of the option.

Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology

38.Removal of clause from Electronic Development Fund (EDF) operating guidelines stating that if a fund draws from Fund of Funds for Startups, then they cannot draw from EDF and vice versa. (Nov, 2018)

Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade

39. Amendment in the definition of a Startup: An entity shall be considered as a Startup upto a period of ten years from the date of incorporation/ registration and turnover of the entity for any of the financial years since incorporation/ registration has not exceeded one hundred crore rupees. (Feb, 2019)
