GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 1281
TO BE ANSWERED ON 09.02.2022

STARTUPS IN SPACE TECH

1281. SHRIMATI VEENA DEVI:

Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY विज्ञान और प्रौद्योगिकी मंत्री **be pleased to state:**

(a) the steps/measures being taken by the Government to attract new startups in the field of Space-tech and other related industries;

(b) whether the Government has undertaken any project to compete with the Chinese hypersonic programs; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY & EARTH SCIENCES (DR. JITENDRA SINGH)

विज्ञान और प्रौद्योगिकी तथा पृथ्वी विज्ञान मंत्रालय के राज्य मंत्री (स्वतंत्र प्रभार)
(डॉ. जितेंद्र सिंह)

(a) to (c): The Government on 24th June, 2020 approved far reaching reforms in the Space Sector aimed at boosting private sector participation in the entire range of space activities.

Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Centre (IN-SPACe) is constituted as an autonomous agency in Department of Space (DoS) for enabling space activities, as well as, usage of Department of Space owned facilities by Non-Governmental Private Entities (NGPEs) and to permit, regulate, promote, hand-hold, monitor and supervise Space Activities of NGPEs in India.

The Ministry of Defence (MoD) has taken steps to attract new startups in the field of Defence and Space. Technology Development Fund (TDF) Scheme is a program of MoD executed by DRDO under Make in India initiative. The scheme was approved by Hon'ble Raksha Mantri in September 2016. The Government has approved TDF Scheme to encourage

industries especially MSMEs and Startups to develop various defence technologies. The scheme operates in Grants-in Aid Mode. At present, a total of 06 projects costing Rs. 3310.58 Lakhs, have been awarded to 06 Startups under TDF scheme and out of which 01 project in the field of Space tech has been awarded to two startups. As stated by DRDO, the information on Hyper-sonic vehicles is sensitive in nature.

Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) with its mandate to support entrepreneurship and innovation across India has supported various initiatives and challenges related to Space Tech over the years.

- Under Atal Tinkering Lab (ATL) Scheme: Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) in collaboration with the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) launched the ATL Space Challenge in September 2021. The ATL Space Challenge was open to all school students across the country and was presented with four broad challenge themes - Explore Space, Reach Space, Inhabit Space and Leverage Space. A total of 8 virtual YouTube LIVE sessions were conducted to guide and motivate the students over a period of 6 weeks. The Challenge concluded with an overwhelming response of more than 2500 entries comprising of 6500 student's participation. The Top 75 teams were announced in January 2022.

- Under Atal Incubation Centre (AIC) Scheme: AIM has supported more than 15 startups working in Space Tech and related industry across India. The focus areas for these startups are in UAV, Drone and Surveillance Equipment, Aero tech, Air Taxi, Space debris tracking and monitoring service, space education among others.

- Under ANIC Scheme: ANIC-ARISE program of AIM in association with Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) launched challenge statements in the below focus areas:

a. Propulsion – Green propellants, Electric propulsion, advanced air-breathing.

b. Geo-spatial information using Machine Learning /Artificial Intelligence (ML/AI).

c. Application of robotics, Augmented Reality/Virtual Reality (AR/VR) techniques.

These problem statements were made open for start-ups / MSMEs through a call for application. After 3 rounds of technical and financial reviews, 6 start-ups are supported with grant-in-aid up to Rs. 50 lakhs over a duration of 12 months.

*****