

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
SPACE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3437
ANSWERED ON:25.04.2012
CONTRIBUTION OF ANCIENT ASTRONOMERS
Maadam Shri Vikrambhai Arjanbhai

Will the Minister of SPACE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government recognizes the contribution made by India`s ancient astronomers in unearthing the secrets of the space;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether any effort has been made by the Government to put to use the ancient Indian science of astronomy into making its forays in the space;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) if not, the reasons therefor?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PG & PENSIONS AND IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY):

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) India`s ancient Astronomers Aryabhata (476-550 A.D), Varahamihira (505-587 A.D), Brahmagupta (598-668 A.D), Bhaskara-1 (600-680.A.D), and Bhaskara-2 (1114-1185 A.D) have been credited with postulating certain fundamental principles of Astronomy including the helio-centric concept of rotation of Earth around the Sun, prediction of lunar and solar eclipse, concept of gravitational force and mathematics of planetary motion.

(c)&(d) These principles are fundamental in nature and form an important step in the advancement of Astronomy and contribute to our understanding of the Modern Astronomy and the methods of Celestial Mechanics that are used in the Space Programme. Government of India is conscious of the significant contributions of the Indian Astronomers. It is for this reason that the first Indian Scientific Satellite, launched in 1975, was named after Aryabhata. The second Indian built satellite for Earth observation, launched in 1979 was named as Bhaskara-1 and the next Indian Earth observation satellite was named as Bhaskara-2. The observatory at Nainital was named by the Government as Aryabhata Research Institute of Observational Sciences in 2004. It is also noteworthy that the International Astronomical Union has named a crater on the Moon as Aryabhata.

(e) Not applicable.