

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2147
ANSWERED ON:22.08.2013
ERADICATION OF SUPERSTITIONS
Gaddigoudar Shri P.C.

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

- (a) whether the Union Government has formulated any specific project aimed at developing scientific temper to fight against the superstitions in rural and urban areas of the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Union Government proposes to involve NGOs in this task; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof;

Answer

MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF EARTH SCIENCES (S. JAIPAL REDDY)

(a) Yes, Madam.

(b) In accordance with one of the fundamental duties enshrined in Article 51(A) h of the Constitution of India, that is "to develop the scientific temper, humanism and the spirit of inquiry and reform", the Government has been diligently and consistently working for fostering the scientific temper among the people.

The Department of Science and Technology has been implementing a programme "Explaining Science behind Miracles" for the past two decades aimed at demystifying/eradicating the so called miracles/superstitions. Science teachers in schools are trained in large numbers to provide appropriate scientific explanations of such events to the students and common public. DST has brought out a publication "Seeing is not always believing" a manual for the trainees. A kit- containing apparatus and requisite chemicals was also developed for demonstrating and explaining the miracles. The kit is available with most of the active Science and Technology (S&T) based voluntary organizations.

The miracles such as producing ash, diamond rings, wrist watches, transforming one object into another etc. out of nowhere and the demonstrations such as walking on fire, eating fire, holding red hot iron rod on palm etc., are invariably a big draw with people watching them in total awe. In fact, all such miracles can be explained through the laws of science such as:

(1) Sleuth of hands; (2) Use of mechanical apparatus/device; (3) Physical and Physiological properties of the human bodies; (4) Chemical reactions;

The Department has launched a campaign for demystification of miracles and eradicating the superstitions with massive training programme of "Explaining Science behind Miracle" since, July 1990.

(c) & (d): Yes, Madam. A number of training programmes were organized to generate quality resource persons across the country with collaboration with NGOs. Financial support is provided for organizing these training workshops and the Department also supports campaigns in demystification of miracles/superstitions. The mass awareness campaign through the programmes such as Bharat Jan Gyan Vigyan Jatha (BJGVS) in 1992, Year of Scientific Awareness 2004, Total Solar Eclipse of 1995 etc. have been successfully organised jointly with NGOs to foster the scientific temper and to eradicate superstitions.