

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1621
ANSWERED ON:26.07.2017
Visiting Advanced Joint Research Faculty
Vasava Shri Parbhubhai Nagarbhai

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

- (a) the salient features of the Visiting Advanced Joint Research Faculty Scheme (VAJRA) along with its present status;
- (b) the details of the funds earmarked, sanctioned and allocated under this scheme, State/UT-wise;
- (c) the details of the target set and achievements made under this scheme so far;
- (d) the number of countries involved under this scheme so far along with its response; and
- (e) whether the Government is planning to include some more countries under this scheme and if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor and the time by which it is likely to be included?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EARTH SCIENCES
(SHRI Y.S. CHOWDHARY)

- (a) The Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB), a Statutory body of the Department of Science and Technology (DST) has recently launched a 'Visiting Advanced Joint Research (VAJRA) Faculty Scheme' to connect the Indian academic and research and development (R&D) systems to the best of global science and scientists for a sustained international collaborative research. The scheme offers adjunct / visiting faculty assignments to overseas scientists, faculty members and R&D professionals including Non-resident Indians (NRI) and Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) to undertake high quality collaborative research in cutting edge areas of science and technology including interdisciplinary areas of priority such as energy, water, health, security, nutrition, materials and manufacturing, etc. with one or more Indian collaborators of public funded academic and research institutions of India. The VAJRA Faculty should be an active researcher working in an overseas leading academic / research / industrial organization with significant accomplishments in R&D. The initial Faculty assignment is given for a period of one year extendable to subsequent years based on the collaborative outcome and interest. The residency period of VAJRA Faculty in the host institution would be for a minimum of 1 month and a maximum of 3 months every year. VAJRA Faculty is provided US Dollars 15000 in the first month of residence and US Dollars 10000 in each of the subsequent month. Presently, call for applications is made open for prospective researchers.
- (b) Sufficient fund is earmarked for the VAJRA Scheme from the overall budgetary allocation of SERB, which stands at Rs. 800 crore in BE 2017-18. This is not a centrally sponsored scheme but a Central Plan Scheme and hence no State/UT-wise allocation is made.
- (c) The scheme is launched recently on pilot basis for initial 3-4 years with a target of enrolling 50-75 VAJRA Faculty per year. A dedicated website www.vajra-india.in has been made available for wider dissemination of the scheme and a portal www.serbonline.in has been put in place for online submission of VAJRA applications.
- (d) Scientists from countries like USA, Russia, UK, France, Italy have expressed interest to undertake VAJRA Faculty assignments in India. The Scheme is open to active and accomplished scientist / faculty from all countries.
- (e) Does not arise in view of (d) above.
