Title: Made a statement on Swarnajayanti Fellowships for young scientists.

15.25 hrs.

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI): Science and technology have always been regarded as powerful tools for the economic and social development of a nation. It is recognised world over that long-term technological competence and international competitiveness can only come from a strong foundation of high quality basic research. In recognition of this, the Government of India, on the occasion of the 50th Anniversary of our Independence, have launched "Swarnajayanti Fellowships for Young Scientists" to enable them to attain world class levels in science.

The Swarnajayanti Fellowships are open to Indian scientists in the age group of 30-40 years with proven track record for outstanding research work exploring new frontiers in their field of expertise. These fellowships are scientist specific. The fellowship includes, in addition to an attractive fellowship amount of Rs.25,000 per month, research grant for equipment, manpower, supplies and consumables, travel including international travel and other special requirements for performing at the highest level. The duration of the fellowship is for a period up to five years.

The Swarnajayanti Fellowships have been widely announced both within the country as well abroad to attract good Indian scientists. A three-tier system for selection of candidates for the Swarnajayanti Fellowships has been adopted. This included sub-committees in six subject disciplines, a National Expert Committee with an eminent scientist as the Chairman with other experts and an empowered Committee of Secretaries under the Chairmanship of Secretary, Department of Science and Technology. The process involved was very rigorous in terms of initial screening by the sub-committees, followed by technical presentations in the sub-committees as well as in the National Expert Committee.

The entire process of the selection of the candidate for the Swarnajayanti Fellowships has now been completed and I am happy to announce on the floor of the House the names of the 11 young scientists who have been selected for awarding the Swarnajayanti Fellowships. They are:

1. Dr. S. Bhattacharya Indian Institute of Science Bangalore

2. Dr. P.P. Chakravorty Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur

3. Dr. A. Choksi Indian Institute of Science Bangalore

4. Dr. D.V. Khakhar Indian Institute of Technology Mumbai

5. Dr. T.P. Radhakrishna University of Hyderabad Hyderabad

6. Dr. Mohit Randeria Tata Institute of Fundamental

Research Mumbai

7. Dr. Madan Rao Institute of Mathematical Sciences Chennai

8. Dr. V.K. Singh Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur

9. Dr. Subroto Sinha All India Institute of Medical

Sciences New Delhi

10.Dr. V. Srinivas Tata Institute of Fundamental

Research Mumbai

11.Dr. Jayant Udgoankar National Centre for Biological

Sciences (TIFR) Bangalore

I wish to congratulate all these young scientists for receiving the Swarnajayanti Fellowships and would like the House to join me in supporting this initiative for the Swarnajayanti Fellowships for the young scientists in the years to come so that many more young scientists could join the programme and contribute towards making Indian Science internationally competitive.

I have also a small information which I would like to share with this House. This morning we felicitated six young boys from India who had gone to participate in Mathematics Olympiad. All the six have received awards; three of them have received gold medals and three silver medals. When the Olympiad in Mathematics was started, India was 25th in rank; today it is seventh in rank. This is how our young boys are doing. I request that the whole House should felicitate these young boys and encourage them for the brilliant work which they are doing.

">SHRI RAJESH PILOT (DAUSA): It is a very welcome step. I was just listening to the hon. Minister. I do not know whether the agricultural sector has been included. I have not heard it but not much focus has been made on it. Somebody from the agricultural sector also may be included because at our IITs lot of good work is done. Agriculture is equally important for the nation and I think that sector must also be encouraged by including somebody who is doing agricultural research.

DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI: This is one for the fundamental sciences and secondly it is divided into six or seven branches, like

Earth Sciences, Life Sciences, Mathematical Sciences, Chemical Sciences and Engineering Sciences. So, this is the technology field. This also we are doing. If there is somebody who is working in Agriculture or Bio-technology or in Chemistry which has an application for agriculture then he comes in it. But as a pure ICAR research that does not come in these seven branches.

">PROF. P.J. KURIEN (MAVELIKARA): We have IITs and universities. But agricultural science comes at a different level. We welcome the very good initiative; we welcome it. India is after all an agricultural country, eighty per cent of our people are agriculturists. So, please announce certain scholarships, or awards for agricultural sciences. They may be separate from these Swarna Jayanti scholarships. That will be good.

DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI: I fully appreciate your sentiments and I am all encouragement for advancing the efforts of agricultural sciences. But it comes under the Ministry of my colleague Shri Sompal, neither under HRD nor under Science and Technology.

">THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): Only recently last week we have awarded 58 awards to various scientists and institutes for outstanding achievements.

SHRI RAJESH PILOT :We would like you to consider similar scholarships as the hon. Minister has announced.

SHRI SOMPAL: I will find out whether there is such a system already.

PROF. P.J. KURIEN :Do something good also. We will congratulate you also.

DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI: I will give all possible help to assist him, wherever I can in formulating and implementing the scheme.