

 'Tapping of Solar Energy'

Rajya Sabha

The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy is implementing several schemes on utilization of solar energy for off-grid and grid-connected applications in the country. The utilization of solar energy systems is increasing regularly. However, the high initial cost of solar energy systems is a barrier in large scale utilization of solar energy systems, specially for power generation.

The Ministry is supporting research and development to reduce the cost, improve the efficiency and performance of solar energy systems and also develop new materials and devices. An amount of Rs. 160 crore has been earmarked for research in solar energy during the 11th plan period.

The Ministry has taken several other steps to increase the utilization of solar energy in the country, which include (i) taking up expanded programmes to encourage utilization of solar energy systems through subsidy or soft loans, (ii) incentive to manufacturers, commercial users and power project developers (iii) support to Akshay Urja shops to provide additional channels for supply and after-sales servicing of solar energy systems, and (iv) support for capacity building and to create awareness through print and electronic media about the solar energy systems and their benefits.

This information was given by Minister for New & Renewable Energy in a written reply to a question in Rajya Sabha today.