

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
DEPARTMENT OF ATOMIC ENERGY
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.1922
TO BE ANSWERED ON 05.08.2021

REFORMS IN ATOMIC SECTOR

1922. Shri V. Vijayasai Reddy:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of reforms proposed in the atomic sector recently by the Finance Minister as a part of PM's Rs.20 lakh crore package;
- (b) in what manner irradiation technology can be used for food preservation and whether this technology is still with the Ministry of Atomic Energy or has it been shared with the private players; and
- (c) to what extent setting up of units on PPP mode help in reducing the food wastage which is 50 kgs per person per year in the country and if calculated it runs into thousands of crores annually?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES & PENSIONS AND PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (Dr. JITENDRA SINGH):

- (a) Following are the reforms related to Atomic Energy proposed by Hon'ble Finance Minister, Govt. of India on 16.05.2020:
 - (i) Establishing Research Reactor in PPP mode for production of medical isotopes to promote welfare of humanity through affordable treatment for cancer and other diseases.
 - (ii) Establishing Facilities in PPP mode to use irradiation technology for food preservation.
 - (iii) Linking India's robust start-up ecosystem to nuclear sector by setting up Technology Development-cum-Incubation Centres for fostering synergy between research facilities and tech-entrepreneurs.
- (b) Gamma irradiation technology is used for inhibition of sprouting in bulbs and tubers, insect disinfestation of cereals, pulses and grains, microbial

decontamination (hygienization) of dry spices etc. for preservation/shelf life extension by applying pre-determined radiation doses. The technology has already been shared with private players and presently 26 Gamma Radiation Processing Plants are operational in the country in private, semi government and government sector for irradiation of various products.

- (c) Setting of food irradiation facilities in the PPP mode certainly mitigates the huge quantum of post-harvest and storage losses of agricultural produce and food that results in national saving. However, reduction of food wastage will depend on various aspects such as post irradiation storage, total quantity of irradiated food products and time lapse between irradiation and distribution to users.
