

the Navy. Motivation drives are conducted in various colleges/institutions in order to widen the scope of target population.

In addition, the valiant image of the Armed Forces is consistently projected through the electronic and the print media. The Directorate of Public Relations of Ministry of Defence, regularly interacts with the media persons, while giving Defence related information and endeavours to ensure positive publicity of the same. Regular coverage of defence related events in the print and electronic media go a long way in creating awareness among the masses and motivating the youth to join the Armed Forces. Websites are also operative on the Internet providing career information on the three Services.

Inclusion of local M.Ps. and local M.L.As. as Ex-officio Members in Defence Cantonment Boards

4188. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government would amend Defence Cantonment Act by including local M.Ps. and local M.L.As as *ex-officio* members of Cantonment Boards;

(b) whether Government would amend Defence Cantonment Act to provide direct elections to Vice-Presidents of Cantonment Boards;

(c) whether Government would amend Defence Cantonment Act to reserve 33 per cent of elective seats in all Defence Cantonment Boards to ladies; and

(d) whether Government would amend Defence Cantonment Act to increase the number of wards due to abnormal increase of population of Secunderabad Cantonment?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (d) A comprehensive Bill is proposed to be introduced to enact new legislation. The provision for inclusion of local MPs and MLAs, reservation for women, direct election of Vice President of the Cantonment Board and the need for increased representation due to population growth in Cantonments will be given due attention while framing the proposed legislation.

Utilisation of budgetary allocations

41B9. SHRI LALIT SURI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Ministry of Defence including the three services has not been able to utilise funds allocated to it in the budget for the last many years;

(b) if so, the quantum of funds which remained unutilised for the last three years ending 31st March, 2003, year-wise and the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken or proposed to be taken to ensure full utilisation of funds allocated to the Ministry and the services in the budget?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) The difference between the net provision made in Defence Services in Budget Estimates and actual expenditure in the year 2000-2001 was Rs. 8964.96 crores and in the year 2001-2002 it was Rs. 7734.27 crores. For 2002-2003, the Revised Estimates were Rs. 9000.00 crores less than the Budget Estimates. The accounts for the year 2002-2003 have not yet been closed and hence the difference between the Budget Estimates and actual expenditure is not yet available.

The detailed reasons for variation between the budgetary allocations and the actual expenditure have been given in the Appropriation Accounts (Defence Services) for respective years presented to the Parliament.

(c) In order to fully utilise the allocated Funds, the progress of Defence expenditure and status of various procurement proposals is kept under constant review and follow up action, as necessary, is taken. A new procurement organisation has also been established to deal with acquisitions on capital account for the Defence Services.

Backlog of Recruitment of SCs, STs and OBCs in MoD

4190. DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the present recruitment and promotional backlog position of SCs, STs and OBCs in his Ministry, PSUs and other factories and organisations under his Ministry, establishment-wise;

(b) since when these backlogs are pending and reasons for non clearance of the backlog, establishment-wise; and

(c) what steps Government propose to take to clear these backlogs within a time frame?