

(b) if so, whether the said drink has been tested; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The drink prepared by Field Research Laboratory (FRL), Leh has been supplied to troops deployed at different posts of Siachen Glacier. It does not freeze upto 20° C in adverse field conditions as well as in laboratory testing.

Defence Purchases from Countries Supportive to National Interests

101. SHRI RAJNATH SINGH 'SURYA': Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to make defence procurements from only those countries who espouse our national interest internationally;

(b) if so, the reasons and details thereof; and

(c) if not, whether Government propose to consider such a proposal in near future?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (c) Procurement of defence items is based on technical and commercial considerations as per the procurement procedure of the Ministry of Defence.

Fire/Accidents in Ordnance Depots

102. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a number of cases of fire in ordnance factories and accidents in transportation of arms and ammunition have taken place after the failure of Agra Summit in 2001;

(b) if so, the details thereof indicating the quantity and value of the loss of arms and ammunition besides property and human lives lost in each case;

(c) whether any sabotage has been established in these cases;

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, what were the causes of these accidents; and

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(e) what extra precautionary steps have been taken to stop recurrence of such cases ?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (e) The details of incidents of fire in various Ordnance Factories and accidents in transportation of arms and ammunition which have taken place after the Agra Summit in 2001 indicating the losses of life, property and ammunition are furnished below :—

Fire incidents in Ordnance Factories :

Sl. No.	Factory Unit	Date	Loss			Brief-cause
			Life	Property Rs. Approx.	Ammunition Rs. Approx.	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.	Ordnance Factory, Varangaon	28-9-2001	1	0.11 Lakhs	Nil	While transferring rejected primer of 7.62 Ammunition from paper carton to Aluminum container in the magazine.
2.	Ordnance Factory, Khamaria	16-10-2001	1	Negligible	Negligible	Improper fitment of disc and washer caused friction and detonator to function other detonators kept in the vicinity also functioned causing explosion.
3.	Ordnance Factory, Itarsi	30-11-2001	3	31.82 Lakhs	14.73 Lakhs	Nitro Glycerine Nitro Cellulose Paste drying exploded due to shock against hard parts received on dry/hot NC-NG paste while shifting.
4.	Ordnance Factory,	07-01-2002	Nil	.02 Lakhs	9.26 Lakhs	Accidental release of striker leading to

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Khamaria					activation of fuse.
5.	Ordnance Factory, Khamaria	16-4-2002	1	Not yet assessed		Explosion occurred during mixing of Z47B composition used as igniter for 84 mm ammunition.
Accidents in transportation of arms and ammunition :						
1.	Sub Ammunition Depot, Udhasar (Bikaner)	11-1-2002	2	2.01 Crores	125 Crore	External explosion inside one of the civil trucks loaded with ammunition due to which ammunition inside the truck exploded.

No sabotage has been established in any of the incidents concerning Ordnance Factories. As regards the Sub-Ammunition Depot, Udhasar (Bikaner), the Court of Inquiry could not ascertain the actual cause and have not ruled out sabotage.

The following precautionary steps have been taken to stop recurrence of such incidents:—

- (a) conducting special safety audit at different levels in the Ordnance Factories;
- (b) examining the tools/equipments used in ammunition and explosive production in the Ordnance Factories;
- (c) making each employee aware of General Safety guidelines and related safety instructions;
- (d) improving house keeping in the Ordnance Factories;
- (e) inculcate safety consciousness and practice a system of constant supervision and monitoring hazardous production process in the Ordnance Factories;

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- (f) inviting suggestion from all categories of employees in improving the safety standards;
- (g) enhanced security is being provided to convoys/trains carrying ammunition;
- (h) restrictions have been imposed on number of vehicles in a convoy; and
- (i) Military transport and trains are being used to the maximum extent possible for the movement of ammunition—Civil Hired Transport is being used only when necessary, after thoroughly checking of civilian drivers and cleaners.

Utilisation of National Defence Fund

103. DR. ARUN KUMAR SHARMA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the total amount of deposit in the National Defence Fund upto December, 2001 including interest accrued thereupon;

(b) the head-wise amount so far utilized for various purposes and future plans, if any;

(c) whether the remaining amount could be reserved for future utilisation to help families of those defence personnel who sacrificed their lives during earlier wars and extremist attack; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (d) The required information is not available with the Ministry of Defence. The National Defence Fund (NDF) is a non-public fund and is constituted entirely with public contributions and not from any allocation out of the Consolidated Fund of India. The disbursement from the funds are made with the approval of the Executive Committee of the NDF.