

Pension for Ex-Servicemen with less than 15 years of service

133. PROF. P.J. KURIEN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleaded to state:

- (a) the total number of ex-servicemen in the country with less than 15 years of service;
- (b) whether they have represented for a minimum pension, in view of the fact that many of them are starving;
- (c) whether Government will reconsider its earlier stand that no pension will be granted to them;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI M.M. PALLAM RAJU): (a) Information on the total number of ex-servicemen in the country with less than 15 years of service is not available separately. However, as per the census carried out by the Office of Directorate General of Resettlement the registered population of ex-servicemen was 20,58,743 as on 31.3.2007.

(b) Representations have been received from personnel who did not render qualifying service requesting for grant of pension to them.

(c) No change in Government policy is contemplated at present.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) A prescribed minimum qualifying service is the cardinal principle to earn pension. As per the existing policy, 15 years & 20 years of qualifying service has to be rendered by Personnel Below Officer Rank (PBOR) and Commissioned Officers respectively in order to be eligible for pensionary benefits. No change in the existing policy is contemplated by the Government.

Delay in sale of warship by Russia

134. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that Russia has delayed the sale of Warship to India recently;
- (b) if so, whether it is also a fact that Russia has increased the sale price of the ship to nearly double the actual cost fixed;
- (c) if so, whether there is any proposal under the active consideration of the Government to contact some other country in this regard; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons for depending on Russia only in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) The overall progress of repair and re-equipping of the ship, ex-Admiral Gorshkov, in Russia is behind schedule. Execution of contract for construction of three ships of Project 1135.6 (follow-on-ships of Talwar Class) is on schedule.

(b) Russia has indicated an increase in price for repair and re-equipping of ex-Admiral Gorshkov.