

*224. [The question (Shri Amir Alam Khan) was absent. For answer *vide* page 22 *infra*.]

Conference of Commanders in Delhi

*225. SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA:††
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian Army, Navy and Air Force had a two day Conference of Commanders in Delhi in the month of October, 2008;

(b) if so, what were the main recommendations made by the Conference to the Government;

(c) whether Government has agreed to examine issue of stress related deaths in the Army;

(d) whether Government has also decided to take steps to check the exodus from Armed Forces;

(e) if so, whether Government has also agreed to increase the benefits to the Army so that the exodus from Army is stopped; and

(f) whether the issue of upgradation of posts was also discussed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI M.M. PALLAM RAJU):
(a) to (f) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

(a) to (f) Combined Commanders Conference was held on November 1, 2008. Army Commanders Conference was held from October 30 to November 4, 2008 whereas Air Force Commanders Conference and Naval Commanders Conference were held on October 30 and 31, 2008. The aim of Army, Air Force and Naval Commanders Conference is to facilitate a meaningful dialogue and exchange of views on important issues concerning the Services. All deaths in the Army are examined through Courts of Inquiry which *prima-facie* establish the cause of death. There is no large scale exodus of personnel from the Armed Forces.

Restructuring of the officers' cadre in the Select ranks by effecting up-gradation of posts in the Army over a period of five years, in the Navy over the next ten years and in the Air Force over a period of five years as per rank-wise details given below has been approved by the Government:-

To the level of	Army	Navy	Air Force
1	2	3	4
Lt. Gen. and Equivalent	20	4	6
Maj. Gen. and Equivalent	75	14	21

††The Question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Rajiv Shukla.

1	2	3	4
Brigadier and Equivalent	222	324	61
Colonel and Equivalent	734	—	415
Total	1051	342	503

SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA: Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister what progress has been made on the recommendations of the Report submitted by the Ajay Vikram Singh Committee. Secondly, besides allowances, does the Government have any plan to include more perks and other benefits so as to attract youth into the Armed Forces?

SHRI M.M. PALLAM RAJU: Sir, the hon. Member has raised an important matter. Two important concerns have been bothering the Commanders, of which he is now referring to the second one, which pertains to career progression of the officers. Subsequent to the recommendations of the Ajay Vikram Singh Committee, which were in two parts, the recommendations pertaining to the first part have been implemented with effect from the end of 2004. Again, the second part of the recommendations have been accepted recently. A decision was made in September, 2004, to implement the second part of the recommendations which would see an assured career progression for the officers, both in the non-select ranks and the select ranks of the officers.

SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA: My second supplementary is this. Is there any provision to compensate the jawans who are posted far away on the borders? Is there any proposal with the Defence Ministry?

SHRI M.M. PALLAM RAJU: Sir, there are a number of allowances which are given to the jawans, who are posted not only on the borders but also at the high altitude areas. And this allowance has been doubled recently, especially, for those posted at the high altitude areas. This will go a long way in motivating them. I would also like to take this opportunity to mention the number of measures that has been taken over a period of last two years for the welfare of jawans and officers who are serving in these areas. As you know, Sir, there is a lot of stress involved, especially, when they are working in counter-insurgency areas. These measures include allowing them to split their leave in three parts instead of two parts, which would allow them to go home frequently; improving their communication facilities, improving the quality of rations and also trying to improve the attitude that exists between the officers and jawans so that the stress is minimised. Similarly, subsequent to the study that was done by the Ministry to assess the conditions on the ground and the stress factors faced by the personnel on the ground, a number of measures have been taken which includes psychological counselling, improvement of working conditions there, and, as I said, improving the quality of rations and allowing them to go home more frequently. To give you an example, for officers working in the

North-Eastern Command, the number of flights has been increased from 200 to 364 so that the jawans can come home more frequently. These are a few measures which, I am sure, will have a positive impact on the morale of our Armed Forces.

DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY: For the Indian Navy, Visakhapatnam is one of the important bases. Sir, a few months back, it was decided by the Group of Ministers that the Hindustan Shipyard should be used for manufacture of sophisticated warships for the Indian Navy. It is almost eight or nine months now since the decision has been taken, but the Hindustan Shipyard has not been brought under the Ministry of Defence. The employees are demoralised, concerned and worried over it. I want to know from the hon. Defence Minister when it is going to take place. I understand that it will be taken up before the Cabinet shortly. But I want a categorical commitment in the House as to when it is going to take place.

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): Sir, I can understand the anxiety of the hon. Member about the Hindustan Shipyard at Vizag. After detailed discussions with the Ministry of Shipping, the Ministry of Defence and the Indian Navy, the Government has taken a decision to handover the Hindustan Shipyard, which is, at present, under the Ministry of Shipping, to hand it over to the Ministry of Defence. That process is going on, and I am sure that at the earliest a final decision will be taken. The Ministry of Shipping is in the process of finalising a Cabinet Note. As soon as it is cleared, we will take a decision.

श्रीमती विप्लव ठाकुर : माननीय सभापति जी, जैसे मंत्री जी ने बताया है कि डिफेंस में ऑफिसर्स की बहुत shortage है, नेवी, एयर फोर्स और आर्मी में ऑफिसर्स की बहुत shortage है, इसलिए उनको ये बहुत incentives देते हैं। क्या मंत्री जी यह बताएंगे कि पहले जो लोग शॉर्ट सर्विस कमीशन पूरा कर लेते थे, उनको IAS और IPS में जाने के लिए कुछ सहूलियतें दी जाती थीं, क्या आप उसको revive करने की कोशिश करेंगे, जिससे कि ज्यादा से ज्यादा ऑफिसर्स आर्मी में आएँ?

SHRI M.M. PALLAM RAJU: Sir, in principle, the approval has been given to improve the conditions of service in the Short Service Commission, and I am sure that they will be implemented. Amongst that, there are a number of measures which also give avenues to the serving officers to get into an educational qualification degree, which will be, probably, funded by the Ministry. These have been approved, in principle, and I hope that...*(Interruptions)*...

श्रीमती विप्लव ठाकुर : पहले ये डिफेंस ऑफिसर्स, IAS और IPS में जाते थे, वहां लिए जाते थे। क्या गवर्नमेंट उस सिस्टम को revive करने की कोशिश करेगी ताकि वे डिफेंस से वहां जा सकें?

SHRI M.M. PALLAM RAJU: We will definitely look into it.

Loss of original map of Nagaland

*226. **SHRI KHEKIHO ZHIMOMI:** Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the original map of Nagaland prepared by the Geological Survey of India has been lost by the custodians entrusted with the same, as reported in the media;

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