

Infantry Battalions of Territorial Army are deployed in Jammu & Kashmir.

(c) While it is not proposed, at this stage, to increase the overall strength of the Territorial Army, certain step regarding restructuring of the organization have been initiated.

Purchase of ALH by Indian Armed Forces

3063. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Indian Armed Forces plan to buy 300 Attack Helicopters (ALH) from HAL to meet their requirement;

(b) if so, whether these helicopters have been designed to meet the specific requirements of the three services; and

(c) if so, what is the timeframe for their induction?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (c) Indian Armed Forces plan to buy Advanced Light Helicopter (ALH) from HAL and not Attack Helicopter as mentioned in the question. These are designed to meet the specific requirement of the Armed Forces. It is not in the national security interest to disclose further details.

Venkatswami Commission

3064. SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have appointed the Venkatswami Commission to prove the issue arising out of the Tehelka Tapes;

(b) if so, whether the terms of reference of the Commission also allows it to give its observation on the responsibility of the then Defence Minister for the use of his official Bungalow for negotiations between Tehelka reporters posing as arms dealers and his top party officials; and

(c) whether the Statement by the Prime Minister that the Commission has not been able to collect evidence against the then Defence Minister amount to making the possible observations of the Commission redundant?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) A Statement is attached. (see below)

(c) No, Sir.

Statement

Government have appointed Justice K. Venkataswami Commission of Inquiry to inquire into the issues arising out of the Tehelka Tapes. The terms of reference of the Commission are as under:

"(a) to inquire whether the transactions relating to Defence and other procurements referred to in the said videotapes and transcripts have been carried out in terms of the prescribed procedures and the imperatives of national security;

(b) to inquire whether in any of the aforesaid procurement transactions, illicit gains have been made by persons in public office, individuals, and any other organization as alleged, and if so, to what extent;

(c) to suggest action that may be taken in respect of persons who may be found responsible by the Commission for their acts of commission and/or omission in respect of the transactions referred to in sub-clause (a) above;

(d) to inquire into all aspects relating to the making and publication of these allegations and any other matter which arises from or is connected with or incidental to any act, omission or transaction referred to in sub-clauses (a) and (b) above."

Construction of Cavitation Tunnel by Naval Science and Technological Laboratory

3065. DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD: Will the Minister DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a Cavitation Tunnel has been constructed by the Naval Science and Technological Laboratories in Visakhapatnam; and

(b) if so, what is the use of the tunnel?

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

(b) The tunnel will be used for conducting hydro-dynamic tests of underwater weapons/submerged bodies developed by Naval Science and Technological Laboratory (NSTL) and Navy.