

- (a) the action being contemplated by Government in Sukhna land scam;
- (b) whether Government would take back the allotted land;
- (c) if so, the details thereof;
- (d) if not, the reasons therefor; and
- (e) the steps Government proposes to take to prevent the recurrence of such scams in future?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) to (e) Eastern Army Command had convened a Court of Inquiry (COI) to inquire into the circumstances under which 'No Objection Certificate' for setting up Educational Institution with residential facility in the land within the Chumta Tea Estate, Sukna was issued. The land belongs to State Government of West Bengal. The Court of Inquiry in its findings and opinion found a number of officers blameworthy. The disciplinary and administrative proceedings against various officers found blameworthy were initiated. Two officers involved had filed applications before the Principal Bench of the Armed Forces Tribunal at New Delhi, *inter alia*, challenging the Court of Inquiry proceedings. In the case of one officer, the Tribunal has directed to reconvene the Court of Inquiry pertaining to that officer. Whenever such incidents are noticed the matter is investigated by the Army authorities under Army Act and Rules and if any body is found at fault, action under the said Act and Rules is taken.

#### **Faults in French made submarine**

†622. SHRIMATI MAYA SINGH: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether some faults have been found in the stipulated standards of French made Scorpene submarines;
- (b) whether during tests of Scorpene submarine conducted in other countries, it was not found suitable to enter into water at any level;
- (c) whether there have been some hindrances in transferring the technology of Scorpene submarine; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) and (b) In the absence of specific inputs, it is difficult to comment upon results of tests on Scorpene submarine conducted in other countries.

(c) and (d) The transfer of Technology is taking place on progressive basis for execution of the project in the country.

#### **Withdrawal of T-72 tanks from testing**

623. SHRI B.S. GNANADESIKAN:

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(a) whether it is a fact that T-72 tanks have been withdrawn by the army from the forthcoming testing of indigenous Arjun MBT and the T-90 tanks;

(b) whether it is also a fact that originally T-72 were supposed to participate in such tests meant to compare the performance of tanks in Indian Army;

(c) if so, the reason for withdrawing T-72 tanks from tests;

(d) whether it is also a fact that the army has proposed costly modernization of T-72 tanks instead of induction of new indigenous Arjun tanks at comparative cost; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) to (e) T-72 tanks form the bulk of the tank fleet held by the Mechanized Forces of Indian Army. Modernization of tank fleet including T-72 tanks is an ongoing process so as to enable it to maintain op-preparedness in view of new weapons acquired by the potential adversaries.

It has been decided to field only the two State-of-the-art tanks, namely MBT ARJUN and T-90 tanks for trial in order to assign operational role for MBT Arjun. T-72 tank is of an older vintage and cannot be compared.

#### **Modernization of T-72 tanks**

624. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:

SHRI SHANTARAM LAXMAN NAIK:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the army has proposed costly mid-term modernization of ageing T-72 tanks instead of placing sufficient orders for new indigenous Arjun tanks at a competitive cost;

(b) if so, what will be the comparative cost of such modernization and induction of new Arjun tanks;

(c) whether it is also a fact that army is not inclined to place further orders for the Arjun tanks beyond current order of 127 Tanks;

(d) whether it is also a fact that such restricted orders from army will render the production of Arjun tanks unviable; and

(e) if so, the steps being taken by Government to salvage indigenization of Main Battle Tank (MBT)?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) to (e) T-72 tanks form the bulk of the tank fleet held by the Mechanized Forces of Indian Army and are likely to continue to be in service. Modernisation of tank fleet including T-72 tanks is an ongoing process to enable it to maintain op-preparedness in view of new weapons acquired by the potential adversaries.

The decision on the future indent of the Arjun tanks would be based on the results of the Comparative Trials.