

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) The contract for supply of three Airborne Warning And Control System (AWACS) aircraft was signed with M/s Elta, Israel on 5th March 2004. The first and second AWACS aircraft were delivered to the Indian Air Force on 25th May, 2009 and 25th March 2010 respectively as per the revised delivery schedule.

(b) The delivery of the third aircraft is planned for December 2010.

(c) Additional AWACS aircrafts are planned to be procured in the 12th, 13th and 14th Plans.

(d) The Defence Research and Development Organization is developing an indigenous Airborne and Early Warning system for use of the Indian Air Force.

Purchase of ULH for army operations

4348. SHRI SHARAD ANANTRAO JOSHI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Government has decided to go in for the purchase of Ultra Light Howitzers (ULH) an important element in the Indian artillery for operations particularly in connection to several areas of northern and eastern commands;

(b) if so, whether it is also a fact that the purchase is now being processed as a single window vendor procurement; and

(c) whether these ULHs will be useful in the anti-naxalite operations?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) to (c) A procurement case for acquisition of Ultra Light Howitzers for the Indian Army is underway as per the provisions of Defence Procurement Procedure 2008. Under the Foreign Military Sales (FMS), the Ministry of Defence had also issued a Letter of Request for procurement of Ultra Light Howitzers to the Government of the USA in May 2009.

Acquiring of Swanky AW-101 helicopters

4349. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government will be acquiring 12 (three-engined) Swanky AW-101 helicopters from a unit of Italian Major Finmececnica for ferrying President, Prime Minister and other VVIPs;

(b) whether this deal has been cleared by the Cabinet Committee on Security despite objections from the Finance Ministry due to security concerns raised by the SPG as well as IAF; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) Yes, Sir. A contract for the procurement of 12 AW-101 helicopters for VIP transportation was signed between Ministry of Defence and M/s Agusta Westland Limited, United Kingdom on 8th February, 2010.

(b) and (c) There were no objections raised by the Ministry of Finance relating to any security concern nor were there any security concerns raised by the SPG or the IAF.

Denial of PB-4 and GP, Rs.10,000 to defence service doctors

4350. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Defence service doctors are denied the Pay-Band IV with a grade pay of Rs.10,000/- (p.m.) as part of the Assured Career Progression, as it is given to all Central Government doctors including the civilian doctors in the Ministry of Defence;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether it is the policy of Government of offer incentives to doctors joining Armed Forces including hard posting allowance?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY) (a) to (c) Terms and conditions of service as also pay and promotion avenues of Armed Forces Medical Services are different and specific to their employment and as such Dynamic Assured Career Progression (DACP) is not applicable.

2. Doctors joining Armed Forces are entitled for those allowances which are applicable to regular officers including hard posting allowance.

Opening of defence production to MNCs' and private sector

4351. SHRI RAMA CHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government has decided to open defence production for multinationals and private industrial houses; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI M.M. PALLAM RAJU): (a) Since May 2001, the defence sector has been opened to 100% private participation with FDI up to 26% permitted, both subject to licensing.