

(c) whether it is a fact that the Army had conveyed their views regarding permanent commission to women to Government; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) Women officers are granted permanent commission in the Medical, Nursing and Dental Services of the Defence Forces. They are not eligible for grant of permanent commission in other Arms and Services in the Indian Army. However, this matter is being examined by the Chiefs of Staff Committee.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

Flaws in T90 tanks

195. SHRIMATI SHOBHANABHARTIA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the army's fleet of Russian built T90 tanks, inducted to serve as India's main battle tank over three years ago have run into serious trouble;

(b) if so, whether the problem included critical flaws in its fire control system and continuing technical flaws are adversely impinging on the Indian army's operational preparedness;

(c) if so, whether Government have taken up this issue with Russian authorities; and

(d) if so, the steps being taken by Government to improve the functioning of T90 tanks?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) There are no critical flaws in the fire control system of these tanks. However, as and when maintenance issues arise, they are addressed with the manufacturers.

Discrimination against women defence officers

196. SHRI M.V. MYSURA REDDY: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that active women defence officers in the Army do not get pension benefits and permanent commission;

(b) whether it is also a fact that women officers, who put in 12 years of service in the Army, get a lower pay scale than their male counterparts with six years of service;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the measures Government propose to take to remove gender based discrimination in pay scales and other matters?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) The defence officers are entitled to retiring pension after 20 years of qualifying service. Since the maximum tenure of Women Officers in Short Service Commission is only 14 years, they are not eligible for pension. However, women permanent commission officers in the Medical, Nursing and Dental Services of the Defence Forces are entitled to pension on completion of stipulated period of service. Granting of permanent commission to women officers in other Arms and Services is being examined by the Chiefs of Staff Committee.

(b) to (d) Pay scale of an officer is decided based on substantive rank held. Short Service Commission women officers in the Army do not get a lower scale of pay compared to similarly placed Short Service Commission men officers. As per a recent decision of the Government, both women and men officers appointed in Short Service Commission in the Army will get Captain, Major and Lieutenant Colonel scales after 2, 6 and 13 years of reckonable service respectively.

Gallantry Awards during World Wars

†197. **SHRI HARISH RAWAT:** Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the British Government had given gallantry awards for meritorious services during First and the Second World Wars;

(b) if so, whether these gallantry awards are being given in the form of allowance, in cash, to the legal heirs of the recipients of said awards;

(c) if so, the number of recipients of such gallantry awards and the amount being spent by the Ministry of Defence on the same;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.