

- (c) the reasons for Navy requiring the islands;
- (d) the procedure adopted by the Navy in the matter;
- (e) the response of the Government of Goa in the matter;
- (f) whether it is a fact that there is a large-scale opposition to acquisition of the islands by Navy; and
- (g) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) to (g) Yes, Sir. Indian Navy has made a request for handing over Grandi Island (large) owned by private party having an area of 5,28,575 sqm and Pikene Island comprising an area of 2,78,525 sqm owned by Government of Goa. These islands are located at a distance of less than 4 Kms in the landing funnel of Dabolim Airport. This proposal has been made in order to address the security concerns related to aircraft operations from Naval Air Station Dabolim and the case is being processed as per existing regulations. Government of Goa has not granted NOC so far nor any report from the Government of Goa has been received by this Ministry.

#### **Purchase of ultra-light howitzers**

198. SHRI JAI PRAKASH NARAYAN SINGH: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government is purchasing Ultra-Light Howitzers (ULHs) for the Indian Army from BAE Systems, against the Defence Procurement manual 2009;
- (b) if so, the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether Government is procuring ULHs through Foreign Military Sale (FMS) Route i.e. through US Programme Route; and
- (d) if so, the reasons for purchasing ULHs through back-door entry route from a corrupt company?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) and (b) No, Sir.

(c) Proposal for procurement of Ultra Light Howitzers (ULHs) through FMS route is underway.

(d) Does not arise.