

(b) if so, what steps Government is taking to provide new equipments to the Air Force; and

(c) what is the position in Army and Naval forces and the details thereof and steps taken by Government to improve the situation?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) and (b) Modernization and upgradation of its equipment by the Indian Air Force is a continuous process. This is done keeping in view the threat perceptions before the country. Government is seized of the threats facing the country and is fully prepared to meet all challenges.

(c) The Navy and the Army also have equipment which have a prescribed life. Hence, there is a life cycle based inventory management approach that is followed. Accordingly, acquisition is an on going process.

Non-promotion of Stenographers Grade-II of AFHQ

1579. PROF. ANIL KUMAR SAHANI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Stenographers Grade-II of Armed Forces Head Quarters (AFHQ) were not given promotion even after rendering more than 20 years of service in that grade;

(b) the reasons for no steps like granting ACP grade taken afterwards retrospectively in respect of them as were taken subsequently; and

(c) the steps Government proposes to take to redress the grievances of the then Stenographers who have since retired retrospectively and make the meaning of Independence meaningful to them?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) No such post of Stenographers Grade-II exists in the AFHQ Cadre.

(b) No such case is available in the entire AFHQ Stenographers Service wherein eligible Stenographers have not been given Financial Upgradation under ACPS/MACPS.

(c) Whenever any representation projecting any grievance by the retired Stenographers of the AFHQ Stenographers Service is received, necessary action to examine and redress it as per rule is taken.

Setting up of DRDO centre in Dharmapuri District, Tamil Nadu

1580. SHRIMATI KANIMOZHI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is considering setting up a Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO) centre in Dharmapuri district, Tamil Nadu;

(b) if so, what steps have been taken so far and by when the centre will start functioning; and

(c) what will be the expected functions of the centre and the total employment potential?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) to (c) Information can not be divulged in the interest of National Security.

Encroachment of defence lands

1581. SHRI NARENDRA KUMAR KASHYAP: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether defence lands have been encroached upon at several places in different States;

(b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise especially Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir;

(c) whether the Government is making sincere efforts to get these land vacated;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the details of the matters pending in the courts pertaining to encroachment on defence lands?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) to (e) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Corruption in defence deals with Israel

1582. SHRIMATI BRINDA KARAT: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that the multi-billion dollar defence deals with Israel have become a major source of corruption and kickbacks, corroding the integrity of Indian defence establishment;

(b) if so, whether there is a move on the part of Government to give a clean chit to the Israeli defence firms, which were blacklisted earlier by Government for being involved in kickback; and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) to (c) Procurement of defence equipment/weapon system is done from various indigenous as well as foreign sources, including Israel, in accordance with the provisions of Defence Procurement Procedure. The said Procedure contains stringent provisions aimed at ensuring the highest degree of probity, public accountability, transparency and safeguarding the integrity of the Indian defence procurement process.

Irregularities in respect of some Israeli defence companies have come to notice and appropriate restrictions have been placed on dealing with these companies.