

MAJOR WARSHIPS

*842. SHRI R. K. BHUWALKA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) what progress has been made with regard to the proposal for the construction of major warships at Mazagaon Dock, Bombay; and

(b) whether any foreign collaboration is involved?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE PRODUCTION IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI A. M. THOMAS): (a) A batch of 15 officers and technicians of Mazagaon Dock Ltd., Bombay are undergoing training abroad and another batch is expected to proceed abroad shortly. The requisite expansion of the Mazagaon Dock Ltd. is being pursued on a priority basis. Negotiations with our possible collaborator are expected to commence shortly.

(b) Yes, Sir.

SHRI C. D. PANDE: May I know, what are the types of warships that will be manufactured there, whether they are frigates which are the lowest among the weapons of defence at sea or we will manufacture destroyers also?

SHRI A. M. THOMAS: We intend to manufacture frigates and I do not think that the way in which my hon. friend has described that ships is correct

SHRI C. D. PANDE: Is it a major ship? It is written in the question 'major warships'. I think frigate is not a major ship. Are we negotiating for construction of major warships?

SHRI Y. B. CHAVAN: Major ship or ordinary ship, all depends on the strategy that we have in the Navy. Really speaking, it is frigate which is a fast moving ship. It is more essential for us. It is much better for our own purpose than the cruiser or any other ship.

श्री रामकुमार भुवालका : क्या मंत्री जी बतायेंगे कि ये नेगोशियेशंस कब पूरे हो जायेंगे, कितने दिनों में ?

श्री वाई० बी० चव्हाण : पहले शुरू होना चाहिये, शुरू होने के बाद शड्यूल बनायेंगे कि कितने दिन लगेंगे ।

श्री विमलकुमार मन्नालालजी चौरङ्गिया : क्या श्रीमान् यह बतलायेंगे कि जो ट्रेनिंग के लिये विदेशों में गए हैं वे किन किन देशों में गए हैं और उनके कब तक अने की सम्भावना है ?

SHRI A. M. THOMAS: They are going to the United Kingdom for training.

श्री देवी सिंह : क्या माननीय मंत्री जी यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि ये जहाज कब तक, कितने साल में तैयार हो जायेंगे ?

SHRI A. M. THOMAS: With regard to the frigates, in fact, we have still to draw up the schedule but it may be possible for us to have them available within four or five years.

SHRI D. L. SEN GUPTA: May I know the name of the country with which collaboration has been entered into and the term, thereof?

SHRI A. M. THOMAS: Sir, with I regard to this we are proposing to enter into an agreement for the construction of frigates with a firm called 'Vickers'. Of course, it is still in the stage of negotiation. That will be subject to the acceptability of the terms that we will be going in for K and also the aid that the United Kingdom Government will provide us. The hon. Defence Minister yesterday made a statement in which it has been stated that the United Kingdom has indicated that it would be prepared to come to our aid for the remodelled of the Mazagaon Dock as well as for the construction of these, frigates.

: SHRI D. THENGARI: Apart from Bombay, what other ports are found suitable for the construction of this warship?

SHRI A. M THOMAS: Bombay is the only place where we intend to manufacture this.

RECRUITMENT OF BmXS TO THE ARMY

*343. SHRI M. RUTHNASWAMY: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the extent to which recruitment to the army obtains among the hill tribes; and

(b) whether the Bhil Corps of the British days still exists in our Army?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI Y. B. CHAVAN): (a) The meaning of 'hill tribes' is not clear. No tribes have been classified as hill tribes. Recruitment in the Army is open to all classes of people, irrespective of their place of residence.

(b) No, Sir.

श्री विमलकुमार मन्नालालजी चौरङ्गिया : क्या श्रीमान् यह बतलायेंगे कि भील जाति पहाड़ों पर रहने वाली है और विशेषकर राणा प्रताप के जमाने में उनका बड़ा नाम था और इनकी सेना बहुत पुरानी है, ऐसी स्थिति में ब्रिटिश के जमाने में भी भील कोल कर के एक स्पेशल विंग रहता था तो क्या हमारे यहाँ भी ऐसी कोई व्यवस्था है ?

श्री वाई० बी० चव्हाण: यह कई सालों पहले की बात है लेकिन ब्रिटिश रेजीम में वह बन्द कर दिया गया, अभी तो ऐसी व्यवस्था नहीं है लेकिन सभी जनता को, सभी जातियों को सेना में आने की सहूलियत है।

श्री विमलकुमार मन्नालालजी चौरङ्गिया : क्या श्रीमान् यह बतलायेंगे कि सेना में भर्ती होने के लिए कुछ निश्चित बातें हैं, यह प्रतिबन्ध है कि यह उम्र होनी चाहिये, यह हाइट

होनी चाहिए और भीलों की आर्थिक स्थिति कमजोर होने के कारण उनकी शारीरिक अवस्था, ऊँचाई या वेस्ट की चौड़ाई वगैरह कम होती है तो ऐसी स्थिति में उनकी विशेष स्थिति का लाभ लेने की दृष्टि से क्या उनके लिये कुछ रिलैक्सेशन कर के उन्हें भी सेना में भर्ती होने की सुविधा दी जाएगी ?

श्री वाई० बी० चव्हाण: सेना के बारे में कुछ रिलैक्सेशन करने की सोचना में ठीक नहीं मानता।

SHRI P. L. KUREEL URF TALEB: During the earlier period of the British regime, these hill tribes, the Scheduled Castes had formed a major part of the British Army, and later on they were gradually excluded, especially from 1857, from the Army. So much so, now these tribes are completely debarred from the Army. Although the Defence Minister has said that there is no distinction made between martial and non-martial people, yet in practice we find that the people of the lower castes and the Scheduled Tribes are not recruited into the Army in the combatant ranks as would appear from the figures supplied through this House.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have expressed an opinion, you have not raised any question. So . . .

SHRI P. L. KUREEL URF TAJUB: What I want to know is whether these people will be recruited in large numbers into the Army. We want to make it a truly national Army. It is not so now. It is the monopoly of some privileged classes.

SHRI Y. B. CHAVAN: I would like to say with all the emphasis at my command that the statement made that the Scheduled Castes or other people are not taken into the Army, that they are excluded, is absolutely incorrect and is rather a misleading statement. I would like to say . . .

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