

(a) whether it is a fact that the Staff and AAOs[†] of controller of Defence Accounts, Patna, are facing a lot of troubles in Inter command transfer issued by the Controller-General of Defence Accounts, New Delhi, at frequent intervals;

(b) whether the staff Association have submitted several memoranda highlighting their difficulties to the CGDA, New Delhi;

(c) whether it is also a fact that on 7 January, 2011, the Bihar Branch of Confederation of Central Government Employees and Workers has submitted a fresh memorandum to the CGDA, New Delhi explaining their difficulties with remedial measures; and

(d) if so, action taken by Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) Only three AAOs have been posted out of the Command on Command seniority basis in the last six months.

(b) No, Sir. There are only two recognized Associations in the Defence Accounts Department and they have not submitted any Memoranda in the recent past. However, this issue was raised in the recent Steering Committee meeting on 21st February, 2011 and was dropped after discussion with the Staff side.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. The Departmental Transfer Policy is already in line with the suggestions made by the Confederation, except for the recommendation that the staff/officers who have come to Patna Command should be exempted from transfer. Generally, transfers in the Department are made on one to one basis, by keeping special circumstances viz. age, health etc. in view. Such transfers are kept to the bare minimum.

Purchase of old helicopters from US

†2201. SHRI BRIJLAL KHABRI:

SHRIMATI MAYA SINGH:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that UH3H helicopters, decommissioned by the American military were procured under foreign military sales programme;

(b) if so, the number of helicopters purchased thereof;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

- (c) the total amount paid for procurement of the helicopters;
- (d) whether any irregularity has come to the fore in this purchase;
- (e) the rationale behind the purchase of such old helicopters; and
- (f) the details of the objections raised by Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) report in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) to (f) Six UH-3H helicopters were procured in November, 2006 at a total cost of Rs. 182.14 crore under Foreign Military Sales (FMS) programme of the United States of America.

The Navy at that time did not have utility helicopters in its inventory to operate from Landing Platform Dock (LPD), INS Jalashwa, also purchased under FMS programme of the US Government. It was essential that helicopters be procured so as to have their delivery along with the LPD to avoid additional transportation costs. The induction of helicopters with the ability to perform various roles like transportation of combat troops, vertical replenishment, search and rescue, casualty evacuation, etc. was necessary to enhance operational utilization of the LPD. Procurement of new helicopters would have taken a long lead time of approximately five years with higher cost implications. These helicopters met the requirement of the vertical lift component of the LPD.

Observations made by Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) in its report in the matter for the year ending March 2009 relate, *inter-alia*, to air frame life, flight evaluation, availability and functioning of onboard equipment, delay in training/operationalization of squadron and serviceability.

Invocation of section 34 of Cantonment Act, 2006

2202. SHRI MOHAMMED ADEEB: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Ministry has recently received representations seeking invocation of Section 34 of Cantonment Act, 2006 for disqualification of some elected Members of Meerut Cantonment Board;
- (b) if so, what action has been taken thereon; and
- (c) the mechanism put in place to prevent illegal continuance of such Members in Cantonment Boards?