

(b) A delegation visited Singapore from 29th May to 11th June, 2005. The Naval wing consisted of one Naval NCC officer and six NCC cadets and the Air Wing comprised of one Air Force NCC officer and four NCC cadets.

(c) The total expenditure incurred was Rs. 5,09,312/-.

Exemption of Ex-servicemen for contribution to ECHS

2388. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that war-disabled Ex-servicemen have been exempted from payment of contribution to the Ex-servicemen Contributory Health Scheme;

(b) if so, whether Government had issued guidelines to the concerned authorities in this regard;

(c) if so, whether Government had also accorded such status to the pensioners of the Ex-servicemen; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI B.K.HANDIQUE):(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) and (d) There is no exemption from payment of contribution to ECHS to the Ex-servicemen pensioners because the scheme is a contributory one.

Kelkar Committee recommendations on defence production

2389. DR. VIJAY MALLYA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Kelkar Committee has submitted its recommendations to Government;

(b) what are the important suggestions made by the Committee to allow private sector firms for production of strategic weapons system and to produce new materials; and

(c) whether Government intend to implement the recommendations made by the Kelkar Committee to formulate a policy to boost weapons exports to make the industry viable?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) Yes, Sir. Part I of the Report of the Kelkar Committee was submitted to the Government on 5th April 2005.

(b) and (c) The recommendations made by the Committee are under examination of the Government.

Acquisition of Dornier aircrafts by Indian Navy from HAL

2390. **SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD:** Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian Navy had acquired 10 Dornier aircrafts at a total cost of Rs. 388.20 crore from HAL for maritime reconnaissance and submarine warfare;

(b) whether the decision to equip the aircrafts with indigenous role equipment, still under development at DRDO, caused much delay in their commissioning; and

(c) whether these ten aircrafts are now being used only for routine surveillance as against envisaged role of maritime surveillance and anti-submarine warfare?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) There was no delay in the commissioning of aircraft. The ten aircraft were inducted in the Navy from February 1998 to December 1999.

The aircraft are being exploited for maritime surveillance and anti-submarine warfare role.

Indo US corporation for futuristic weapon system

2391. **SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SRIGIREDDY:** Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Director of Pentagon Defence Cooperation