

Purchase of 197 LUHs

187. SHRI MOINUL HASSAN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government is buying 197 Light Utility Helicopters (LUHs);
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the buying process started in 2003; and
- (d) if so, the reasons for delay and the action being taken by Government to speed up the process?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) and (b) Sir, there is a proposal for procurement of 187 Light Utility Helicopter (LUH) under design and development project undertaken by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL).

- (c) The project was sanctioned by Government of India in February, 2009.
- (d) The project is proceeding as per approved time lines.

Kaveri aero engine developed by DRDO

188. SHRI NAND KUMAR SAI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has developed the Kaveri aero engine in collaboration with French firm;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether DRDO has made consultations with Indian Air Force before the finalization of the said agreement; and
- (d) if so, the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) and (b) No, Sir. However, Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) is negotiating with M/s SNECMA, France for co-development and co-production of Kaveri Aero Engine for the Light Combat Aircraft (LCA), Tejas Mk-II.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. Indian Air Force (IAF) has been consulted at every stage and is part of negotiation for the co-development of Kaveri engine. The draft engine technical specification has been examined and cleared by IAF and has further suggested that the engine design should have minimal impact on the LCA, Tejas airframe for future retro-fitment.

E-ticketing project for travel by armed forces personnel

189. SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government had approved a project for e-ticketing for rail and air travel for officers and jawans of three defence services; and

(b) whether it is a fact that pilot project started one year back was a success, but same could not be extended after one year?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The e-ticketing pilot project has been evaluated by the Services. The project has faced some difficulties which are being resolved.

Deployment of engineers on road construction work by BRO

190. SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in Border Roads Organisation (BRO) most of the officers from Army on deputation and deployed in road construction/civil engineering works are from non civil engineering/road engineering background;

(b) if so, reasons why GREF officers from civil engineering background are recruited and deployed in road construction work;

(c) whether GREF officers of non engineering Cadre may also be allowed to take active role in road construction; and

(d) whether the Army officers once posted in BRO are coming again in organization and spending most of their service in BRO and whether it is justified?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) Army Engineer officers are posted in Border Roads Organisation (BRO) as per manning ratio approved by the Government. These officers are drawn from Corps of Engineers, Corps of EME and Corps of Signals. Officers drawn from Corps of Engineers have experience of infrastructure development and combat operations in Army and in BRO they are entrusted with the execution of road and bridge works. The officers from Corps of EME are entrusted in BRO with the duties of Maintenance and Equipment. The officers drawn from Corps of Signals are entrusted with the duties in BRO of Signal and communication. Presently, the total number of Army engineer officers posted to BRO is 193 out of which 124 are from Civil Engineering background having a BE/B.Tech (Civil) degree and remaining are from other engineering streams.

(b) and (c) BRO is a composite organisation with two streams of Army and General Reserve Engineer Force (GREF). GREF engineers are recruited as per Government policy of manning ratio between Army and GREF officers. GREF officers play active role in road/bridge construction works of BRO.

(d) Officers in the Corps of Engineers are rotated between works appointments in BRO/MES and regimental duties/staff duties. Certain appointments in BRO require previous experience as essential Qualitative Requirement (QR).